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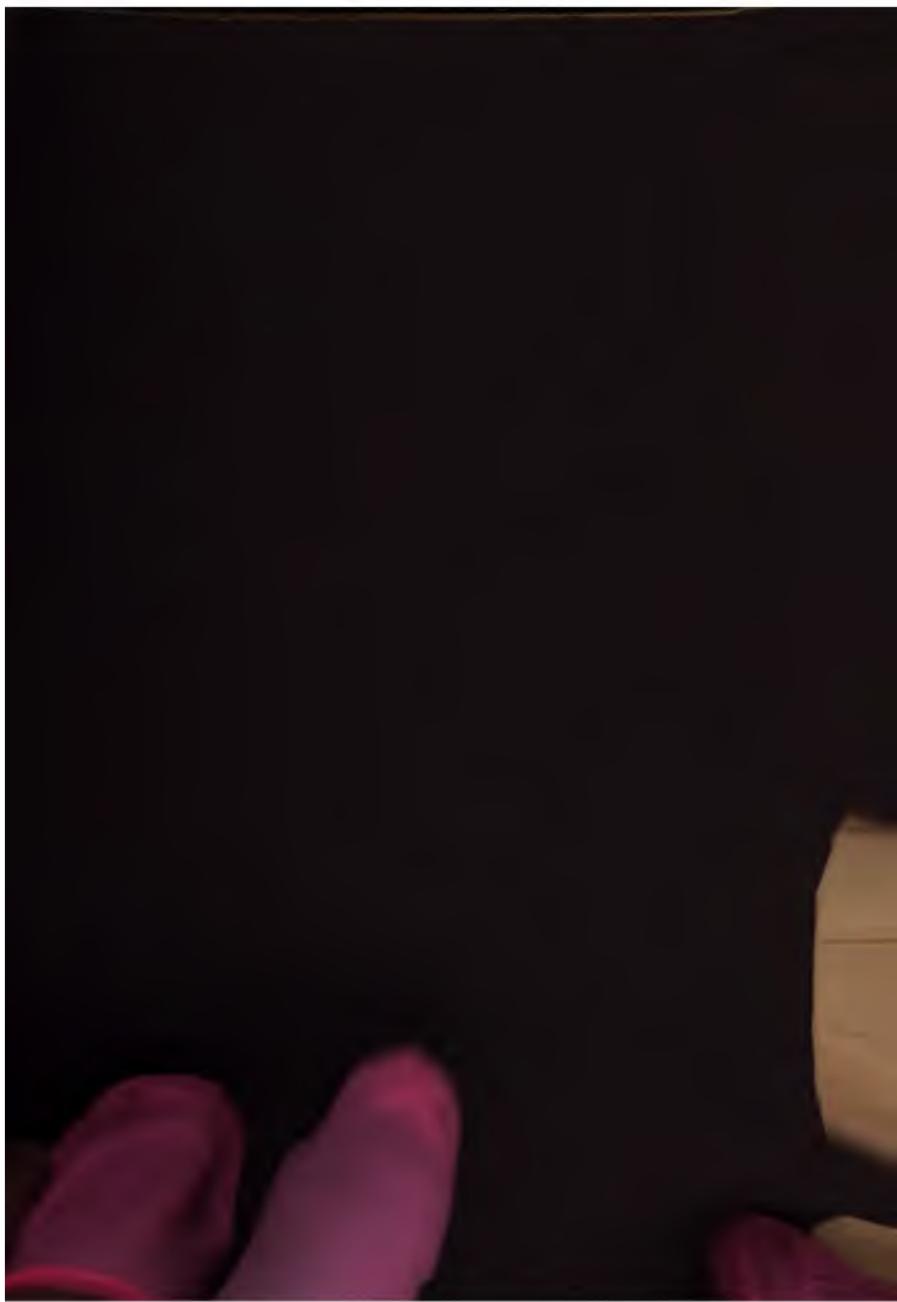
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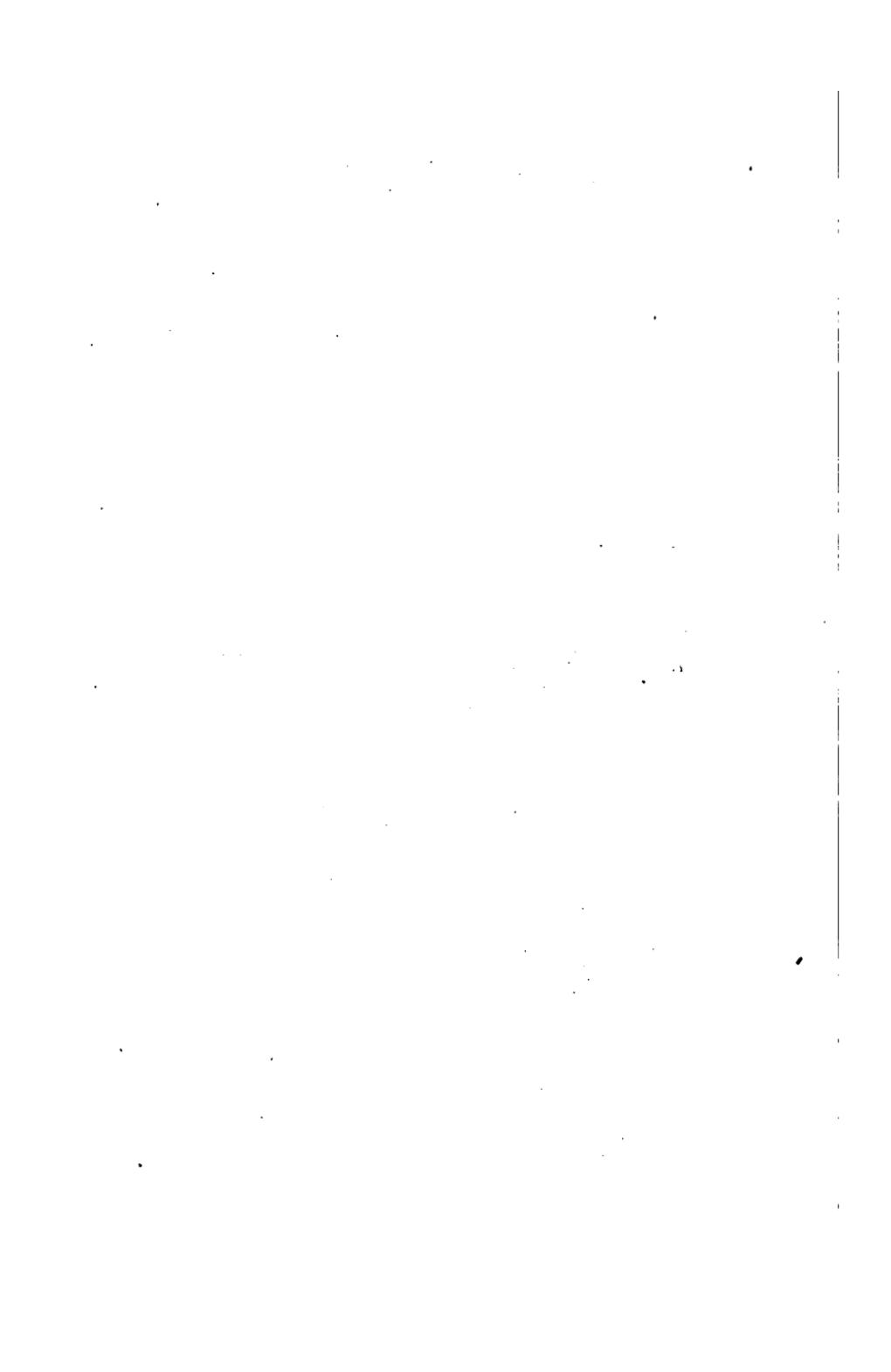








"Growth in the knowledge of our Lord."



"Growth in the knowledge of our Lord."

MEDITATIONS FOR EVERY DAY OF THE YEAR,
EXCLUSIVE OF THOSE FOR EACH FESTIVAL, DAY OF RETREAT,
ETC.

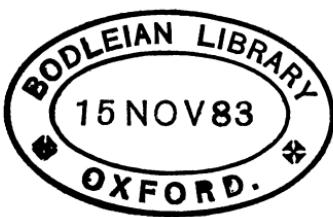
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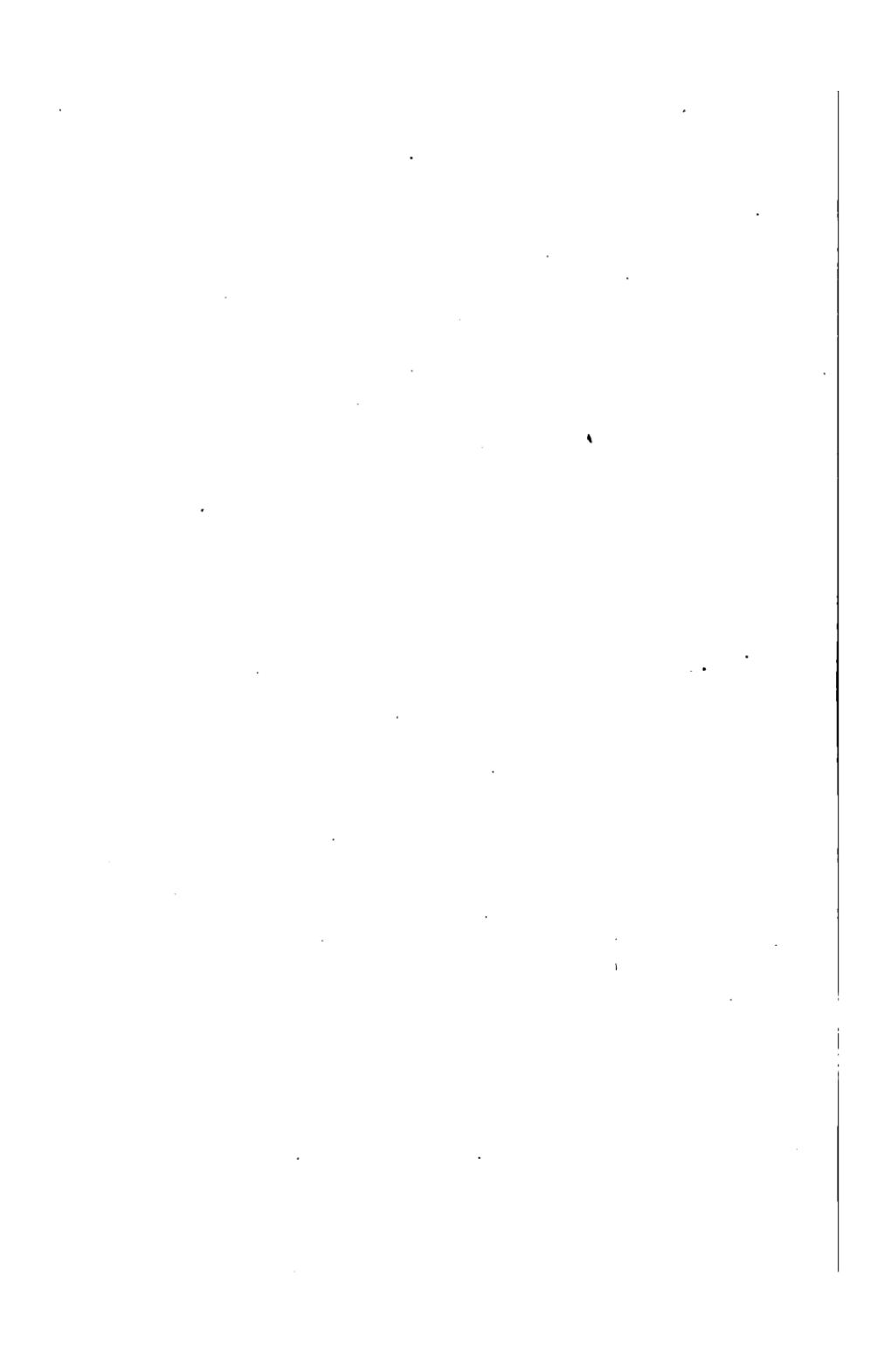
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P R A Y E R S.

OUR Father, Who art in Heaven ; hallowed be Thy Name ; Thy kingdom come ; Thy Will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us ; and lead us not into temptation ; but deliver us from evil. Amen.

HAIL Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the Fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners ; now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Soul of Christ, sanctify me ;
Body of Christ, save me ;
Blood of Christ, inebriate me ;
Water from the Side of Christ, wash me ;
Passion of Christ, strengthen me ;
O Good Jesus, hear me ;
Within Thy Wounds hide me ;
Suffer me not to be separated from Thee ;
From the malignant enemy, defend me ;

In the hour of my death, call me ; and bid me come to Thee, that with Thy Angels and Saints I may praise Thee, for all eternity. Amen.

O GOD, Who didst teach the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant that we may, by the gifts of the same Spirit, be always truly wise, and ever rejoice in His consolation. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

TAKE, O Lord, and receive my memory, my understanding, my whole will : all that I have, all that I am, I give to Thee, to be made use of, according to Thy good pleasure. Give me only Thy love and Thy grace : with these I am rich enough.

O JESUS, living in Mary, come Thou and live in my soul ;—by Thy Spirit of Holiness,—in the fulness of Thy Strength,—in the perfection of Thy Virtues,—in the power of Thy Truth,—and by communicating to me Thy mysterious Graces. Deliver me from all the enemies of my salvation ; and govern me by Thy Spirit, to the glory of Thy Father. Amen.

O LOVING Jesus ! open Thy Sacred Heart to me, show me Its charms, unite me to It for ever : may every breath I draw, every beating of my heart, be so many proofs of my love ; and remind Thee, that I belong entirely to Thee, O Lord. Receive graciously, O my God, the small amount of good I am able to do each day ; so that I may bless Thee in this life, and praise Thee for all eternity. Amen.

O God, Who by the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, didst prepare a fit habitation for Thy Son, we beseech Thee, that as by the foreseen Death of her same Son, Thou didst preserve her pure from all spot, so Thou wilt likewise grant, that by her intercession we may be made free from sin, and attain unto Thee. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

We fly to thy patronage, O holy Mother of God ; despise not our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us always from all dangers, O glorious and blessed Virgin.

MEDITATIONS.

Eighteenth Week after Pentecost.—Sunday.

The power of Jesus to forgive sins.

*That we may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins, JESUS saith to the man sick of the palsy: Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thy house: And he arose, and went into his house: And the multitudes seeing it, feared, and glorified God, Who had given such power to men.—
S. MATT. IX.*

I. PRELUDE.

We may imagine to ourselves with what astonishment the multitude witnessed the effects of the power exercised by Jesus, over the palsied man.

II. PRELUDE.

Grant to us grace to understand how deeply we are indebted to that power of curing the diseases of the soul, which Thou, O Son of Man, hast Thyself exhibited when on earth, and left as a legacy to Thy Church.

I. POINT.

Jesus had power on earth to forgive sins.

'Bodily disease is one of the consequences of sin. It may not result in the majority of cases, directly from any particular sin committed by any particular sufferer; but it is the punishment for universal guilt, of which each one has a part to bear; some in a greater, some in a lesser degree, according to the wise permission of God. Pain and suffering are often largely distributed amongst His best and truest servants: to them is accorded the privilege of sharing in a higher degree the punishment endured by Him *Who did no sin, and yet delivered Himself to them that judged Him unjustly*, so that by His human suffering we might be healed. However great our suffering may be, it can never equal that which Jesus endured in compliance with His Heavenly Father's Will, at the hands of His cruel tormentors: under whatever form it may come, it is for us to bear it in the spirit of expiation; uniting it (by means of resignation and patience) to the stripes, the buffeting, the crowning with thorns, the crucifixion, of the Son of Man. In cases where God visits us with temporary sickness, it is often His intention to draw forth our trust towards Him—to incite us to pray for relief—to prove our faith—to purify us—to discover to us our helplessness—to accustom us to the thought of our last end—to increase our desire *to be delivered from the body of this death* Jesus, by the miraculous cure of body and soul, in the case of the man sick of the palsy, wishes us to understand that He can, as Son of Man, destroy not merely the effects of sin, but efface past guilt—its cause. To shew that He had power to forgive the wrong, He remitted the punishment due for the wrong.

Arise, He said, not only from beneath the weight of bodily infirmity, but arise, freed from the burden of past sin also. While we study the lesson this proof of Jesus' power as Man, is intended to convey, let us thank Him for having delegated this divine power to the Priests of His Church—His successors, who claim authority to act in His Name. How often have they not performed miracles of healing? Is not the ministry of reconciliation—the power of remitting sins, committed to them?

II. POINT.

The multitudes feared and glorified God.

Is any man sick among you? Let him bring in the Priests of the Church, and let them pray over him. . . . And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man: and the Lord shall raise him up: and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him. Here we see one of our Lord's Apostles verifying the dogma that the sacramental powers Jesus, as Man, possessed, are also possessed undeniably by those who are lawfully commissioned by Him, to carry on His work of saving mankind from the consequences of sin. This consideration should cause us also to *fear and glorify God*. We witness the extension of the effect of that word of authority—*Arise*, still in vigour every day of our lives: but do we not sadly forget how indebted we are to Him *Who hath given such power unto men?* Health of the body may be sought for, with great faith in the power of God to grant it; and yet it may be denied: in such a case we may rest assured God sees that bodily health would prove prejudicial to the health of the soul. But with regard to the latter, He never withholds the remedies necessary to renew and fortify our spiritual life, if only we earnestly seek them. Who has not

4 EIGHTEENTH WEEK AFTER PENTECOST.—SUNDAY.

cause for much personal thankfulness as the words of to-day's Gospel recur to the mind? When Jesus has said to us by the mouth of His Priest : *Thy sins are forgiven thee*, have we gone back to our appointed duties *glorifying God?* Does the importance of the Sacrament, wherein is manifested the absolving power given by God to men, so affect our hearts that we are ready to exclaim, as we witness its effect in ourselves and others : *We have seen wonderful things to-day.*

COLLOQUY.

Would that I were less ungrateful for the mercy Thou, O Jesus, hast evinced towards me, in providing me with means of grace for the renewing and the fortifying of the health of my soul. If it be Thy Will to grant me bodily strength, let me devote it wholly to Thy service ; make me to appreciate more deeply the spiritual remedies of which I may avail myself, as a member of the true Church. Each time I hear the words of absolution, may I arise refreshed and strengthened, and glorify God for having given such power to men.

RESOLUTION.

To ask chiefly for the health of my soul.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

They glorified God that gave such power to men.

PRAYER.

Soul of Christ.

Eighteenth Week after Pentecost.—Monday.

On Frivolity and Slothfulness.

Wisdom is more active than all active things : thinking this with myself, and pondering it in my heart, that to be allied to wisdom is immortality.—WISDOM VII.

I. PRELUDE.

If we would imitate Jesus Christ we must avoid all that is contrary to true wisdom.

II. PRELUDE.

Grant, O Lord, that obtaining from Thee grace to overcome all frivolity and slothfulness, we may be always occupied in pleasing Thee.

L POINT.

Want of control over our thoughts is an obstacle to spiritual progress.

Many persons there are, who by their conversation, their pious sentiments, their fidelity to the practices of religion, testify their desire to attain holiness ; but they are not conscious perhaps of a defect in themselves which causes their will to oscillate between good and evil ; and decreases their power of making progress in the spiritual life. This defect consists in frivolity : a certain levity pervades the imagina-

tion, and leads captive the powers of the soul; and so it comes to pass that the attention is absorbed in matters of no moment, and turned away from the only Object worthy of it. This failing is not to be lightly passed over, for it renders the soul feeble and cowardly in the service of God: and it is, in fact, the more harmful, because they who are under its influence are often beguiled into believing themselves free from it. They waste their time in vain thoughts and useless desires; and let their minds be occupied perhaps for hours together, with the recollection of some little annoyance; or in nourishing pride by needlessly recalling some words of praise or flattery. Do we find that we are wholly exempt from the faults arising from an uncontrolled imagination? Do we permit our thoughts to wander in and out the circumstances of a humiliation? or linger idly near some reminiscence of applause? No wonder that there is so little true devotion in our prayers and meditations, that our minds are filled with vanity or vexation, if we do not habituate ourselves to repress at all times vague, frivolous, trifling imaginings. To combine gravity with cheerfulness, serious-mindedness with spiritual joyousness, ought to be our aim. While we seek to acquire greater promptitude in dismissing thoughts arising from self-love, we shall at the same time be learning to fix our attention more and more on those things which concern our eternal interests.

II. POINT.

Another hindrance to our spiritual advancement is slothfulness.

Slothfulness and cowardice are closely allied to each other; of this alliance tepidity and relaxation are the result.

And slothfulness does not necessarily mean idleness, nor repugnance to any particular form of work ; but rather an inclination to inaction, as opposed to effective watchfulness and real self-sacrifice. We are naturally so cowardly about undertaking anything for God, which we foresee will demand patience and perseverance : and sluggishness lurking beneath this pusillanimity, proves itself a vice most difficult to correct, because it is inherent in our nature. It is not easily recognisable, save by souls on the alert to discover their most secret foes. Are we aware to what extent slothfulness is really injuring our inner life? Knowing that it is only to be overcome by generous fervour and unwearing vigilance, let us strive to exercise both ; and acquit ourselves better of the active duties—exterior and interior—of our respective callings. *Blessed is that servant, whom when his Lord shall come, He shall find watching : Wherefore let us be also ready.* Not only must we be on our guard lest our Good Master receive any injury through our neglect, but day and night let us be trying to please Him ; for *He may come in the second watch, or He may come in the third watch.* It behoves us to examine what our fervour is, in our ordinary actions—in our exercises of piety. Are we subject to the depressing influence of spiritual sloth? Are we habitually negligent with regard to our religious duties? our acts of mortification? Are we indifferent as to whether we are overcoming our base cowardice or not?

COLLOQUY.

I find that all the powers of my soul should be more actively and constantly engaged, O my God, in rendering Thee service. By Thy grace I understand how needful it is for me to banish from my mind all frivolous ideas and vain

8 EIGHTEENTH WEEK AFTER PENTECOST.—TUESDAY.

imagining. Help me, on these two points, to be more alive to the dangers I may incur through negligence. Enable me to avoid all cowardice and slothfulness: to watch lest thoughts of self-gratification and vanity engross me, and hinder me from communing with Thee.

RESOLUTION.

To fill my mind with holy thoughts, and to overcome spiritual slothfulness.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Arise then, and be doing; and the Lord will be with thee.

PRAYER.

Our Father and Hail Mary.

EIGHTEENTH WEEK after Pentecost.—Tuesday.

The Parable of the mustard-seed.

JESUS said: To what shall we liken the Kingdom of God? It is as a grain of mustard-seed; which when it is sown in the earth is less than all the seeds that are in the earth: it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches.—S. MARK IV.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us listen to our Lord as He elucidates the truth, that from small and humble beginnings great results grow.

II. PRELUDE.

O Divine Jesus, Who wouldest teach us by Thy words and actions the excellence of humility, make us to derive much benefit from meditating on the parable of the mustard-seed.

I. POINT.

God Himself shews us the excellence of humility, by the manner in which He makes feeble means to issue in great results.

God raises His most important and most perfect works upon the lowest and most hidden foundations ; His design being to manifest in this way His own power and glory. By reason of His dominion over us, He has a right to expect that we shall humbly submit our thoughts, words, and actions to His control. He does not infringe our right to exercise our free-will, but if we, of our own accord and from motives of humility, unite it with His divine Will, He will work out in us His holy purposes. Our dependence on God is extreme ; with it our humility certainly ought to correspond. Deep down in the heart should it reside : then will it manifest itself exteriorly, quite simply—naturally—without affectation. We do well often to ask of God light to understand the nature and the various characteristics of this virtue ; and also that He may give us, not only a sincere love for it, but grace to practise it. The mystery of the Incarnation (the master-piece of all the wonderful works achieved by the Holy Spirit), owes its origin, so to speak, to the virtue of self-annihilation in the Word-made Flesh, *Who being in the form of God, debased Himself, taking the form of a servant.* The King of Glory became the outcast of the

people : the Creator of the universe was apparently despoiled of His infinite power : His authority was lost in the abyss of His humility. Are we not surely out of our right place, if we are not walking in the Footsteps of the Lowly Son of Mary? Whose whole Life was an illustration of the words we have under consideration : *The Kingdom of God is like to a grain of mustard-seed.*

II. POINT.

The grain of mustard-seed becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches.

“Would you be great,” says Saint Augustine, “begin by being little.” Sowing the seed of humility in the fertile soil of the knowledge of our own nothingness, we shall find that it will take root therein ; and thence will spring the vigorous tree of a holy life, spreading out its branches of perfection, in which God will take pleasure, and cause to be a source of edification to His Church. It will resemble indeed, the tree, spoken of by the Psalmist, which watered by the stream of God’s grace, *shall bring forth its fruit in due season : and its leaf shall not fall off.* Humility will raise us above the world, and the higher it carries us, the clearer we shall see how vain and mean are all its so-called pleasures. When shall we thoroughly comprehend the excellence and advantages of this virtue? Has it in any appreciable degree lifted us up towards God?—nearer Heaven? Have we really sown the grain of mustard-seed? Do we often make our examen on our manner of bearing humiliations? Are we feeling the same repugnance for them as ever? Does our nature still rebel at the very thought of reproach or contempt? Do we hide with care all that might lower us in the eyes of others?

Do we, even to ourselves, speak deceitfully, trying to persuade our consciences to be more lenient? O humility! honoured and sanctified by all the actions of Jesus, loved of God, and respected even by the world, sure foundation of all virtues, source of our future exaltation and glory! Can we do otherwise than resolve without delay, to exercise ourselves better in this virtue? to accept gladly all humiliations? nay more, to court them eagerly?

COLLOQUY.

O Thou, Whose power is illimitable, art the Most High God! Out of nothing Thou hast created me: how infinite is the difference between my nothingness and Thy greatness! What am I that Thou art mindful of me? Entirely dependent on Thy goodness and mercy I feel myself to be. Why then am I so often proud and self-willed? I kneel before Thee and beseech Thee to increase in me the spirit of humility. May I look upon myself as the last and the least of all.

RESOLUTION.

Often to examine myself on my progress in humility.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

To the humble God giveth grace.

PRAYER.

Take, O Lord, and receive.

Eighteenth Week after Pentecost.—Wednesday.

On belonging entirely to God.

Have confidence in the Lord with all thy heart : in all thy ways think on Him, and He will direct thy steps.—PROV. III.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves what the happiness must be of those who belong wholly to God ; and think of what His love for such must also be.

II. PRELUDE.

Enlighten us, O God, to know what we must do in order to be more completely Thine, and give us grace to follow Thy inspirations.

I. POINT.

What it is to belong to God.

They belong to God who adopt the rules of a perfect life ; and conform their lives to these rules with love and devotedness. They belong to God, who obey with fidelity the inspirations of His grace, and desire to omit nothing voluntarily, that they could do for His glory. But amongst those who profess to be His, there are many who follow the maxims of the world rather than those of the Gospel ; and are far more disposed to please themselves, and to content their own tastes, their vanity, their wishes, than to do that

which would please the Heart of Jesus, and render them agreeable to Him. Such belong more to themselves than to God. There are few, it is greatly to be feared, who out of distinct preference for it, seek to accomplish the good pleasure of God; who *lean not on their own prudence*, but set before them the promoting of God's glory as their only aim. Unreservedly do these cast away all selfish gratifications arising from earthly affection; and undue respect for mere human reasoning. We cannot serve God and the world at the same time. *No man can serve two masters: For either he will hate the one, and love the other: or he will sustain the one, and despise the other.* The life which is truly Christlike consists in freedom from the slavery of the world, and in the enjoyment of *the liberty of the children of God.*

II. POINT.

We must give ourselves to God, without any reservation.

Within us grace and nature maintain continual strife. Grace is ever fighting on the side of God; and nature on the side of the world, into the fatal vortex of which it would draw us. At one time or another in our lives the combat is severe; if we would not be conquered by the mortal enemy of God and of our own souls we must die to self; and this dying life will last until the death of the body shall terminate for ever the combat between nature and grace, and the last victory of the Christian soul be won. We hear Saint Paul saying of himself: *I die daily:* let us also learn how to be able to repeat his words, by detaching ourselves from all that is of the world, and from ourselves. So shall we live only in and for God. For what purpose have we

14 EIGHTEENTH WEEK AFTER PENTECOST.—WEDNESDAY.

consecrated our lives to Him? Is it not to acquire sanctity? Is it possible that we are permitting any friendly intercourse to be established between ourselves and our Master's enemies? Let us think of the dying lives of the Saints, of those who have belonged absolutely to Him. Do we find that any privations, hardships, difficulties, alarmed them? Have they listened to nature with her many repugnances, and cowardly excuses? Have they not, on the contrary, trampled under foot all human interests in order to be freed from them, and to be at liberty to give all their powers of body and mind (together with their heart's affections), without reserve to Him Who alone has a claim upon them? O Lord of our life! do Thou forgive our want of fidelity, and accept our resolution to belong henceforth entirely to Thee.

COLLOQUY.

O God! art Thou not my Sovereign Master? Have I not consecrated myself to Thee? my body, my mind, my soul, my will? All are absolutely Thine. Rescue me from myself, whenever there is a fear of my forgetting that I am not my own. Thou seest how prone I am to seek my own gratification, but I trust in Thee for help to vanquish all self-seeking. Awaken in me, I beseech Thee, a stronger desire to correspond more faithfully to the grace of my vocation, so that I may study in all I do to accomplish Thy good pleasure. I am Thine, O God, save Thou me!

RESOLUTION.

Often to remind myself that I belong to God alone.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

I cannot serve two masters.

PRAYER.

Take, O Lord, and receive.

Eighteenth Week after Pentecost.—Thursday.

The patience of Jesus.

Behold, I stand at the gate, and knock.—APOP. III.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves our Lord Jesus Christ standing at the door of our hearts, seeking admittance.

II. PRELUDE.

O Jesus, can it be that we are so indifferent as not to open the door of our hearts to Thee? Teach us how to receive Thee, and may we never again keep Thee waiting without.

I. POINT.

Jesus constantly manifests His patience and longanimity in our regard.

16 EIGHTEENTH WEEK AFTER PENTECOST.—THURSDAY.

O Lord! dost Thou indeed patiently wait, that we may open to Thee our hearts, and invite Thee to enter therein? Art Thou not the Supreme Master of them? Why then dost Thou stand without and knock? Dost Thou act thus to make us understand that Thou wilt not deprive us of our liberty of action? Yes, Thou desirest that we, of our own accord, unbar the gate of the abode of our affections, and bid Thee welcome. Thou wildest that we ask Thee to make our hearts Thy sanctuary; and that we offer Thee the service of a free will—the homage of an unconstrained love. But are we not ready at all times to receive such a Guest? Alas! too often Jesus has to wait without for a long time! He wearies not: months, perhaps years pass by, and He is waiting still; with His Hands full of gifts, which He is earnestly longing to bestow. Are we, any of us, so rich in spiritual gifts that we need no more? And yet we have often repulsed them, and the Divine Giver. Happy are we, if instead of keeping Him waiting, we watch for Him, recognise His Footsteps, and quickly hear His Voice. He presents such as desire His coming with His choicest blessings, *and if we open to Him the door, He will come in and will sup with us, and we with Him.*

II. POINT.

Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is ever waiting for us.

The Son of God came down, as He Himself declared, from Heaven, to seek and to save lost man, and to replace him in the way of salvation. During the days of His mortal Life, He found His occupation in going after the strayed sheep of the house of Israel. And does He not still repeat His words, as He waits for us day and night in

the lowly Tabernacle : *I am here to seek and to save ?* How often He waits in vain, no one near Him, no one thinking of Him ! To those who go to Him there, and open their hearts to Him, He has always somewhat to say—some grace to offer. He asks of us perhaps some sacrifice we have hitherto been too weak or too cowardly to make. He asks of us more generosity, more zeal, more charity. Or He requires from us greater piety, greater detachment—a truer love of solitude and of His Sacramental Presence. He may have to reproach us for our negligence, our tepidity, our mistrust. Or He utters a complaint against us, because? —each one for himself knows why ! *If we then will hear His Voice, let us not harden our hearts, but listen to what the Lord God will speak in us, for He will speak peace unto His saints, and unto them that are converted to the heart.* Enter then, O Jesus, into the sanctuary which Thou hast chosen for Thy dwelling-place, and accept the grateful tokens of our gladness in having Thee as our Guest. Come again and again, O Lord ; renew Thy loving visits ! Go not far from us, O Bridegroom of our souls.

COLLOQUY.

How often, Lord, I have kept Thee waiting when Thou wouldest enter my heart, Thou only knowest ! I can but fear that this negligence, this unkindness, this want of hospitality has been oft-repeated on my part. Now, again Thou speakest to my heart, *Open to Me* ; and shall I refuse? shall I ever again repel Thee, my Beloved, or leave Thee standing unheeded when Thou dost ask admittance, in order to give me some new gift of grace? when Thou dost knock —perhaps to bring within the truest token of Thy love for

18 EIGHTEENTH WEEK AFTER PENTECOST.—FRIDAY.

me, a Cross. Most welcome art Thou, O my Jesus, most acceptable shall all Thy gifts be.

RESOLUTION.

Not to refuse any sacrifice Jesus asks me to accept.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

I stand at the gate and knock.

PRAYER.

O Jesus, living in Mary.

Eighteenth Week after Pentecost.—Friday.

On Simplicity.

Our glory is this, that in simplicity of heart, and sincerity of God, we have conversed in this world.—II. COR. I.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us recall to mind the love that Jesus ever manifested when on earth, for simplicity and sincerity.

II, PRELUDE.

O Lord Jesus, may we learn to practise the lessons of true simplicity which Thine example teaches us. Grant that we may be sincere in all our words and actions.

I. POINT.

Simplicity in thought.

Evangelical simplicity is known only to those who desire perfection, and who are learning or have learned through self-forgetfulness, to think only of God and His greater glory. Freedom from self-consciousness—this is simplicity: freedom from self-interest—this is sincerity. Before the Apostles were trained in the exercise of Christian virtues, they, we are told, disputed about their respective claims to priority, and it was on this occasion that Jesus, desirous of elucidating His precepts concerning simplicity, *took a little child and set him in the midst of them, and said: Unless you become as little children you shall not enter the Kingdom of Heaven.* What is it but artlessness of which our Lord hereby testifies His highest approval? the contrary virtue to that fulness of deceit and conceit, which He ever condemned more severely than any other vice. Let us obey the Divine Master, and take a child's simplicity and sincerity as our model. With what docility shall we then learn divine lessons, believe in all that God tells us, and feel the utmost security in His Presence! Our confidence in Him will become absolute, we shall always have Him in view, and the pleasing of our Heavenly Father will be the one single aim of our lives. As Saint Jane de Chantal said: “Simplicity reduces all things to one—and that One is God”. Hence proceeds calm faith, trustfulness in obscurity, and unalterable peace in all the varying and trying circumstances of life. O spirit of simplicity, who would not earnestly desire to possess thee! who would not carefully seek thee!

II. POINT.

Simplicity in action.

Simplicity in thought is not however sufficient: if we would render our actions uniformly free from all affectation, we must avoid all duplicity in our manner of acting, and singularity in our outward conduct. Sincerity is the essence of simplicity; the least artifice, the smallest unreality destroys it. In order to be simple in our demeanour we should speak without dissimulation, and act without self-consciousness. Simplicity desires no distinction, is not disquieted by the opinions of others; judging not, it has no fear of being judged: it is the source of exterior regularity—the antidote to the poison of human respect. Oh, let us make this beautiful virtue our own! so shall we *serve the Lord with a perfect and most sincere heart*. How little is singleness of purpose known in the world, or appreciated where it is recognisable! There all is disguised under false appearances; there empty protestations and false civility take the place of the unfeigned courtesy in speech and manner, of the truly good. If we always remembered the Presence of God we should always be simply acting so as to please Him; as it were unconsciously—without effort. While we meditate upon the essential conditions of simplicity, we ask Thee, O Jesus, to give us a genuine love for it, and humility to put it into constant practice.

COLLOQUY.

O God, would that I, like Saint Paul, could say that my glory is in this: that I have exercised myself in simplicity of heart and in perfect sincerity. Would that I were so divested of all unreality, that each thought and action might be the reflex of the divine simplicity of Mary's Child. By Thy grace may my obedience be unreasoning, my piety unconstrained, my love for Thee pure, and wholly disengaged

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from human interests. Let me remain more consciously in Thy Presence, O God!—more unconsciously in my own or that of others.

RESOLUTION.

To aspire to greater simplicity—freeing my mind from self-inverted thoughts; and my actions from all pretension.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Serve the Lord with a perfect and most sincere heart.

PRAYER.

Soul of Christ.

Eighteenth Week after Pentecost.—Saturday.

Jesus reprimands the ambition of the Disciples.

There entered a thought into the Apostles, which should be the greater.—S. LUKE IX.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us place ourselves near to Jesus, and listen to Him as He says: *He that is the less among you all, he is the greater.*

II. PRELUDE.

Lord Jesus, may we enter with reverence Thy divine school, and do Thou teach us also another lesson in humility.

I. POINT.

The sentiment of pride which Jesus condemned in His Apostles.

The Heavenly Master had already given His Disciples various instructions concerning humility. He had spoken with them of the ignominy of the Cross, and the glory which lay beyond It, in order to make them understand that the way of humiliation is the road to true greatness: nevertheless, they did not yet understand, but still took pleasure in representing to themselves the grandeur of the temporary royalty, with which they would invest their King. That their motives were not disinterested, we find from the words of Him Who had seen the thoughts of their heart. O folly of human pride! how dost thou deceive souls, and hinder the operations of the Holy Spirit of God. Yes, pride is the evil phantom of our imagination. Let us consider its effects in the case of the Apostles. They had been poor fishermen: their Master constantly taught them humility by word and example, their ignorance was great, their present condition mean: and yet pride caused them to be ambitious of the honours of a royal court, and to dispute as to which of their number should take the most exalted position. Under one form or another we are the victims perhaps of a similar hallucination. Called to be the disciples of the God-Man, we have notwithstanding, each one of us, our special object of ambition; a coveted place in some imaginary royal court. If this were not the case, why this self-esteem—this self-sufficiency—these pretensions—this ambition for a certain charge or employment? Are there no heart-burnings? stifled perhaps, but not extinguished in us. Is there no tendency to weigh the question—*which shall be greatest?*

II. POINT.

The means proposed by Jesus to His Apostles as a remedy for pride.

If any man desire to be first in the Kingdom of God, he shall be the last of all, and the minister of all. The Divine Word, by Whom all things were made, having created man for the enjoyment of eternal glory, is certainly desirous, not of suppressing his longing after happiness and exaltation but, that this longing be directed towards the attainment of eternal, not of temporary honour and greatness. Man's heart craves for pre-eminence, and this desire taking an upward course, has produced many examples of high sanctity. There is an ambition so laudable that our Lord plainly told His Disciples how to carry it out. The plan to be adopted is just an inversion of that which nature suggests, when she places an ambitious aim before us. She would never so demean herself as to say : Make yourself the servant of all—the last of all. Having, however, professedly set ourselves to win a place amongst those who will hereafter *follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth*, are we making humility the means by which we hope and intend to reach it ? In order to be sure on this point, we shall do well to consider closely our aspirations and intentions ; and availing ourselves of the counsel given by the Divine Master to the Apostles, act upon it as faithfully as they did.

COLLOQUY.

How marvellous is my ingenuity in discovering some reason why I should be exalted above others, in either one way or another—for this cause or for that. Why do I forget

that *Jesus is seeing my thoughts* of pride and self-conceit, and that He wishes me to take to myself His questioning reproach : *Of what have you been treating either in your thoughts or words on your way to-day?* O Jesus ! I now listen to Thy words ; but like the Disciples, must I not hold my peace ? I have often been ambitious about the attainment of some imaginary advantages ; and charity and humility have been sacrificed to the desire of gaining, at least, some little notoriety. Henceforth may I seek only heavenly distinction, and *the glory which is from God alone.*

RESOLUTION.

To ask myself frequently what is my highest ambition.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

In humility let each esteem others better than themselves.

PRAYER.

O Jesus, living in Mary.

Nineteenth Week after Pentecost.—Sunday.

The Marriage of the King's Son.

The Kingdom of Heaven is likened to a King, who made a marriage for his son : And he sent servants to call them that were invited to the marriage : and they would not come. . . . Blessed are they that are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb.—S. MATT. xxii. . . . APOC. xix.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves Jesus Christ as the King's Son : in order to consummate the union between Himself and His Church He descends into this world.

II. PRELUDE.

O Jesus, Divine Spouse of the Holy Church, grant that we may gladly avail ourselves of the invitation to Thy unending Marriage-Feast.

I. POINT.

The marriage in the Gospel typifies the union between Christ Jesus and the Church.

We may consider that three invitations have been given to this spiritual Banquet. The first was that general announcement made to all men, the calling them into the way of salvation from the beginning of the world, by the patriarchs and prophets. But how few accepted this invitation : *They would not come.* Not many entered the promised inheritance who were called out of Egypt, although they were bidden to go to a good Land, *where without any want they should eat bread, and enjoy abundance of all things.* We cannot but marvel at man's ingratitude and foolishness, and at God's goodness and forbearance. . . . The second invitation was given by the more immediate heralds of the coming of the King's Son, to make Himself known as the Head of the Church. The Heavenly Father sent other servants, saying : *All things are ready ; come to the marriage.* But the Jews would not recognise the accomplishing of the prophecies in the Son of Mary : they

looked only for a Saviour from temporal grievances, and they neglected the invitation to the marriage, and *went their way*. We wonder again at the small number of those who acknowledged the King's Son, and entered into the Kingdom of God He came to establish on earth. . . . The third invitation has been given to all the world, by the preaching of the Gospel in the high-ways of every land. Many, *both bad and good, have been gathered together*, and the house of the Church has been filled. *When the King comes in to see the guests*, will He find us clothed with the wedding garment of His grace? Have we no cause to be astonished again—at our own heedlessness?

II. POINT.

The marriage in the Gospel is also a figure of the union of the soul with God.

We are united to God in three ways. The first union has for its source that sanctifying grace which makes us the children of God, and inheritors of an eternal Kingdom. The wedding-robe with which we were clothed in Holy Baptism, if kept unsullied, renders us ever-pleasing to the Divine Spouse. Let us preserve it with great and unceasing carefulness. . . . The second manner of union is due to the Holy Eucharist. This august Sacrament not only sanctifies us, but actually makes us one with Him, Who therein gives Himself to us. *He that eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, abideth in Me and I in him.* Everywhere we find this mystical Banquet prepared for us: all are called to It. *Come unto me*, says our Lord, *all you that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you.* But we must not approach Him without the wedding-garment of grace. We must not permit that the condescension and

mercy of the Celestial Bridegroom in admitting us to His Table, should ever produce indifference or disrespect. He should be at the same time loved, reverenced, and adored. Do we make our preparations for Holy Communion with sufficient care? The third bond of union has its origin in the glory which we shall share for ever with God, and which will render us like unto Him. The union between ourselves and our Creator then is threefold, as we have seen; and bears the seal of eternity, which nought save our freewill can break: we may possess God without fear of losing Him—His Will controlling ours.

COLLOQUY.

Be Thou ever blessed and praised, O my God, for having placed me within Thy Holy Church: may I ever remain united to thee by sanctifying grace, communicated to my soul most especially by the participation of the Divine Eucharist—the pledge of the eternal union which is to exist between me and Thee, O God my All. Grant that I may faithfully correspond to Thy gracious designs, and be worthy to be admitted to the great Marriage-Supper of the Lamb.

RESOLUTION.

To renew the consecration of myself to God in Holy Communion.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Christ is the Head of the Church: He is the Saviour of His Body.

PRAYER.

Soul of Christ.

Nineteenth Week after Pentecost.—Monday.

Jesus speaks in the Temple.

From the fifteenth day of the seventh month shall be kept the Feast of Tabernacles seven days to the Lord. . . . About the midst of the Feast, Jesus went up into the Temple, and taught.—LEV. xxiii. . . . S. JOHN vii.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us go in spirit to the Temple at Jerusalem, and hear Jesus disclaiming all honour for Himself : *My doctrine is not Mine, but His That sent Me.*

II. PRELUDE.

O Jesus ! give to us grace to attend to Thy teaching, and to put Thy holy doctrine into daily practice.

I. POINT.

The modesty and humility of Jesus in preaching His doctrine.

Already the enemies of our Lord, jealous of the attention and the glory which His miracles had won for Him, were in high indignation ; and when some declared : *He is a good man*, they raised up strife concerning Him, and said : *No, He seduceth the people.* In order that this feeling of excitement might be allayed, Jesus did not appear in Jerusalem openly on the great Festival-day. But though He would not

act with precipitation, He also would omit no duty through fear. Therefore we find him after the popular clamour had spent itself, going up to the Temple, *His time being then accomplished.* In the midst of the Feast, at the moment appointed by the Father, He appeared; and notwithstanding much opposition He taught many important truths. At the outset He told His auditors that *His doctrine was not His, but that of Him Who sent Him.* Let us meditate upon and admire the modesty and humility of the Son of God. He declared that what He proposed was no strange doctrine, nor an invention of the human mind, and that He came there *not of Himself, but had been sent by Him, Who was true,* in Whose Name He spoke. What a lesson of patience and modesty is here placed before us! Far from taking vengeance on His adversaries or leaving them to their blindness, Jesus endeavours by gentle means to dispel their false prejudices. Hereby He shows us how to repress all the emotions of self-love, and to be moved only by that which touches the interests of God's glory. We should be able to say with our Divine Model, regarding all we teach by word or deed : *My doctrine is not Mine, but His That sent Me.* How holy an influence should we possess, if we laid aside all personal considerations, and spoke and acted in simple accordance with the inspiration of the Spirit of Jesus.

II. POINT.

To know and teach the doctrine of Jesus, we must learn it and practise it with love.

If any man shall do the Will of God, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God. We cannot say of divine knowledge as we can of human science, that in order to

know and communicate it to others, to study it is sufficient; for we are assured that the only infallible means of succeeding in the exercise and teaching of it, is to practise it constantly; with a fervent desire to adopt each point in perfection, as the Holy Spirit of God unfolds by degrees the requirements of a truly spiritual life. He proportions the light of His grace to our fidelity; renders it clearer and more penetrating as He finds our generosity and love increasing. He communicates Himself more and more to men of good will; and hence arises the fact that many who have had no other Master than Jesus Christ, no other book but the Crucifix, have become profoundly learned in the science of the saints. Others, on the contrary, although they may have had many more appliances, and extraneous assistance in their study of sacred doctrine, have only arrived at a very limited and profitless knowledge of it. Is our knowledge poor and fruitless? Have we yet learned the secrets of the hidden life which the Divine Teacher only can impart? how to die to self? to love suffering? poverty? humiliation? Or are these and similar exercises of virtue which mark real progress, still to us impenetrable mysteries? Let us strive lovingly to learn more, and practise better what we do know, of the doctrine which is Divine.

COLLOQUY.

Pardon me, O Divine Teacher, on account of the little progress I have made in the spiritual life—in that sanctity which my holy estate demands. I must indeed own that I study Thy holy doctrine in too superficial a manner; that the highest of all sciences I take so little pains to cultivate. And yet, I dare not plead that it is too difficult to acquire, for Thou hast told me that its secrets *are revealed by the*

Heavenly Father to little ones. Is it because I am wise only for this world, and selfishly prudent—is it because I am so far from being little in my own opinion, that I remain in a state of ignorance concerning the science of the Cross? O Holy Spirit, help me to be more docile regarding Thy inspirations: *instruct me unto salvation*, I beseech Thee.

RESOLUTION.

To repair past negligence by assiduously studying the Divine doctrine of Jesus.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me.

PRAYER.

Our Father, and Hail Mary.

Nineteenth Week after Pentecost.—Tuesday.

Jesus is the Source of all good.

On the last and great day of the Festivity, Jesus stood and cried, saying: If any man thirst, let him come to Me, and drink.—S. JOHN VII.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us return to the Temple, and hear the declaration made by Jesus on that last great day of the Feast of Tabernacles.

II. PRELUDE.

While we listen with respect to Thy words, O Jesus, give us grace ardently to desire for ourselves those most excellent virtues of which Thou art the Fountain.

I. POINT.

Jesus replenishes with grace all who draw near to Him.

If any man thirst, let him come to Me, and drink. Such is the invitation Jesus gives to all those who desire to be animated by His Spirit, to the end that they may lead a truly spiritual life. Let us then go to Him, and draw of the water of life from His Sacred Heart. The soul that is replenished with it, cares not at all for the things of sense; adopting as its own the declaration of the royal Psalmist: *For Thee, O God, my heart and my flesh hath fainted away: Thou art the God of my heart, and the God that is my Portion for ever: It is good for me to adhere to my God.* United to the Source of all true happiness, our desires are satisfied: and without any intervention of human aid, we receive a constant supply of strength and consolation direct from Him Who saith: *All you that thirst come to the waters.* Having drunk deeply of this living water and purified our souls thereby, Jesus, according to His promise, will be our Life. He will live in our thoughts—being the Object of them all; in our will—which we shall conform to His good pleasure; in our affections—which will ever tend towards Him; in our whole conduct—for we shall be reproducing His virtues. O Jesus! attract us more to Thyself, the Fountain of all sanctity; and enable each one of us to say with the confidence of Saint Paul: *I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me.*

II. POINT.

The effects of the life of Jesus within us will be evident.

If our faith in God be sincere, and if the spirit of Jesus be the mainspring of our existence, we must needs lead holy lives. On that last day of the Festival, Jesus spoke of the Holy Spirit, *Which they should receive who believed in Him*. To those who have received the precious gift of faith, the power to become holy is offered. He Who is the Lord and Life-Giver thus speaks to the heart of all who bear the name of Christians : You who desire to be delivered from your sinfulness *come to Me*, and receive the remedies most suited to your need : you who aspire to perfection, *come to Me*, and from the Source of all holiness draw the graces you most earnestly wish to possess : you who burn with ardent zeal for the salvation of souls, *come to Me*, and allaying your thirst at the Spring of spiritual renewal and refreshment, go forth strong in the strength of Divine power. The Spirit of Jesus, animating His Bride the Holy Church, says with loving urgency : *Come ! and he that thirsteth, let him come : and he that will, let him take the water of life, gratis.* If God design us to be the channels of His mercy and charity to the souls of others (all unworthy though we must feel ourselves to be of this high privilege), we should bear continually in mind the greatness of our responsibility, and that whilst we, by a life of sanctity, are dispersing abroad the streams of Jesus' love, which in so large a measure we have received, it is God and God alone *That giveth the increase*. *They that gain souls are wise—not wise in their own conceits, but humble in their devotedness : And in Thy House Thou shalt make them drink of the torrent of Thy pleasure.*

COLLOQUY.

Thou, O Spirit of Jesus, biddest me come to Thee, and take of the water of life, for which I thirst. *As the hart panteth after the fountains of water, so my soul panteth after Thee, O God.* I beseech Thee to replenish my soul with Thy grace: make my heart to overflow with Thy goodness, so that I may cause others to rejoice in the abundance of Thy mercy, by attracting them to Thyself, the Fountain of living water.

RESOLUTION.

To go more often to Jesus, believing in Him as the Source whence I may derive every blessing.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

If any man thirst, let him come to Me, and drink.

PRAYER.

Soul of Christ.

Nineteenth Week after Pentecost.—Wednesday.

Jesus the Light of the World.

I am the Light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.—S. JOHN VIII.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us imagine that we see Jesus early in the morning, re-entering the Temple: He thus addressed the people who had assembled to hear Him: *I am the Light of the world.*

II. PRELUDE.

Deign, O Lord, to illumine our souls in this present life, and hereafter satisfy them with the beauty of Thine eternal glory.

I. POINT.

They who follow Jesus are enlightened by Him.

Jesus, the Divine Sun of Justice, in rising over this world, dispelled the dark shadows in which it lay: so in shining forth upon the soul It scatters the mists by which it has hitherto been enshrouded. Thus Jesus makes good His promise, that *having come a light unto the world, whosoever believeth in Him shall not remain in darkness.* And the full light of grace streams in upon those souls that remain near to Jesus; within range of the genial influence of the heavenly sun-beams. *He that followeth Me walketh not in darkness;* and rapid indeed is the progress made by such as, imitating the example of Jesus, and treading along the course marked out by Him, are led onwards by His illuminating guidance. *He will make straight the path for thy feet, and all thy ways shall be established.* After our Lord had openly declared Himself to be the Light of the world, He illustrated the truth of this by working miracles which testified in a direct manner, of His antagonism to the powers of darkness. As He passed out of the Temple, He again repeated to His followers the self-same words (which

had aroused the indignation of the Pharisees) before the performing of the miracle of giving sight to the man who was born blind : *I am the Light of the world*. . . . Again, He dispelled the darkness of the grave and the shadow of death, immediately afterwards, by the raising of Lazarus ; and as He spoke to the multitudes for the very last time, these words again resounded in their ears : *I am come a Light into the world*. Pondering over their deep significance, let us ask ourselves if we are walking as children of the Light ? if we see Jesus, and Him that sent Him ?

II. POINT.

Eternal glory is promised to those who follow Jesus.

And let us consider our Lord, not only as the Light that enlighteneth us now (if we are indeed following Him) for *He shall be unto us for an everlasting light, and our God shall be our glory. He that followeth Me, shall have the Light of Life*. Here are the conditions laid down by our Lord : in the present life constant progress along the track made clear by the rays of grace that fall across it (*it shall be called the holy way*)—and in the unending future, rest in the enjoyment of the full splendour of Himself—*Who is the Brightness of the Father's Glory*. On that day when *we shall enter into Sion with praise*, we shall know, for the first time the true, immense value of each suffering and humiliation we may have endured, for love of Jesus. How greatly shall we rejoice if we have walked faithfully in the way of the evangelical counsels. Ought we not to take courage, and go on our way with gladness ? Is not the hope of Heaven an incentive powerful enough to

excite us to fresh exertion? Although clouds may sometimes seem to darken our path, the Light beyond is undimmed, and we are nearing it all the more rapidly on account of our quickened desires to reach it. Glory be to thee, O Jesus! *in Thy Light shall we see light.*

COLLOQUY.

O Light of the world! by Thy illuminating grace I distinctly see that there is no true beauty save in virtue, no genuine happiness but in Thy love, no real peace unless it be gained by the renunciation of created things. Keep in my mind a grateful remembrance of having been delivered from the powers of darkness, O Jesus, and enlighten me yet more and more. May I follow the light of Thy grace here, until at length I attain to the enjoyment of beholding for ever the light of Thy glory.

RESOLUTION.

Not to follow any light but the true Light of the world.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

In Thy Light shall we see light.

PRAYER.

Soul of Christ.

Nineteenth Week after Pentecost.—Thursday.

Self-examination before Holy Communion is necessary.

Try your own selves if you be in the faith: prove ye yourselves. Know ye not your own selves that CHRIST JESUS is in you, unless perhaps, you be reprobates.—II. COR. XIII.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us consider how our Lord is daily outraged in the Holy Eucharist, even by those who know that He is present there.

II. PRELUDE.

O Jesus, give us grace always to approach Thy Holy Table with pure hearts, having made due preparation for the receiving of Thy Precious Body and Blood.

I. POINT.

Prove ye yourselves.

Why it is so necessary to examine our lives constantly, in order worthily to partake of the Eucharistic Feast, Saint Paul explains in these words :—*Whosoever shall eat this Bread, or drink this Chalice unworthily, shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord: But let a man prove himself: He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's Body.* Alas! Jesus

is received sometimes into unprepared hearts. He is insulted by being introduced into the presence of His deadliest enemy—sin : He is outraged by an entire absence of attention : He is received as a Guest, only in mockery. The abode into which He is ushered is darkened by evil passions, and disorder reigns therein. Is this a place into which one dare invite Him in *Whose sight the heavens are not pure?* Better were it for those who thus entertain Jesus, *if they had not known the way of justice.* Such a communion did Judas make. Jesus said : *One that eateth with Me shall betray Me : But woe to him by whom the Son of Man is betrayed.* If the renegade Apostle had but *proved himself*, in that hour of grace which still was his, he would have avoided the awful crime of *eating and drinking damnation to himself.* With this terrible doom on the one hand, and the solemn warning of our Saviour on the other : *Except you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood, you have no life in you,* where does safety lie ? In this : *Let a man prove himself,* and so let him eat at the Sacred Banquet, and live for ever.

II. POINT.

After what manner we should discern the Body of Jesus Christ.

"If we come not to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, we fly from Life : if we intrude ourselves unworthily we incur His displeasure." *Who is wise and will understand the mercies of the Lord aright?* The desire of receiving Holy Communion may not always be relied upon as proceeding from a sufficiently pure intention, therefore it is that we should know how to discern the motives which prompt this desire.

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Does our desire emanate from love? that love which instinctively shrinks from offering aught to the Beloved that might savour of an affront. It is love which makes us discerning with regard to the mercies of the Lord, in giving Himself to be our Sustenance. Where self-righteousness, hypocrisy, human respect, and thoughtless routine have anything to do with the desire (put into practice) of receiving Holy Communion, love for Jesus is either fast asleep or extinct, so that it has not the power to rise and chase away the intruders which have usurped its place. True active love, by a diligent preparation, not only dismisses from the heart and mind all that might show actual disrespect to the looked-for Guest, but, before going forth in ardent desires to meet Jesus, places there anew the virtues He delights to recognise—humility, purity, and contrition. There is no point on which we should examine ourselves more closely, than on that of our manner of preparation for the reception of Jesus in the Sacrament of Love. The best means of insuring holiness of life, is so to live that we may be always prepared to communicate worthily. And if we are ever in a condition of readiness for “the conjunction of our Lord with our body and soul,” we shall not fail to be in a state of preparedness for the eternal Nuptial Feast, to which He may at any moment bid us come.

COLLOQUY.

O Jesus, may my love for Thee be so real and so ardent, that it may make me feel I can never do enough to render my heart rightly prepared for Thy constant visits. Never let me so offend Thee as to neglect to purify and adorn it in preparation for Thy coming. May I always *prove myself* before approaching to receive Thee; and then, enlightened by Thy

grace, discern Thy Presence. And may each Communion be an act of preparation for that last one, in the strength of which I hope to gain admittance into Thy visible Presence, never more to go out therefrom.

RESOLUTION.

Always to approach the Eucharistic Feast with a prepared heart.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Let a man prove himself.

PRAYER.

Soul of Christ,

Nineteenth Week after Pentecost.—Friday.

On true spiritual-mindedness.

*They that are according to the spirit, mind the things that are of the spirit : the wisdom of the spirit is life and peace.—
ROMANS VIII.*

I. PRELUDE.

Let us remember how, throughout our Lord's Life amongst men, He was continually teaching that true religion consists in interior piety and goodness.

II. PRELUDE.

May we, O Jesus, seek to be truly spiritual, so that with pure hearts and minds we may serve God.

I. POINT.

In what the spiritual life consists.

Spirituality is the pervading characteristic of the soul that is faithfully striving to become like Jesus Christ. It disposes it to seek God in all things, to serve Him with great simplicity ; to have no other aim under every circumstance, than that of pleasing Him, and acquiring the perfection He demands. This spiritual-mindedness consists in constant watchfulness over all the emotions of the heart, in order to effect its submission to the Spirit of Jesus—to bring about the entire subjugation of nature to grace. It consists further in continual union with God, in the midst even of the most active employments : in a perfect correspondence to the inspirations of the Holy Ghost. They who are exercising themselves in the attainment of true spirituality have chosen the better part, for which our Saviour so highly commended Saint Mary Magdalene. Its happy possessor finds a charm in conversing with the Divine Master, and the effect of such an intercourse must of necessity be a rapid progress in the way of holiness ; since it gives life and merit to every action, interior and exterior. O God, Thou seest how requisite for us this spirituality is, in the midst of our numerous occupations. Help us then by Thy grace ; put Thy divine love into our hearts, and incline us unceasingly to desire closer union with Thee, and truer conformity to Thy good pleasure.

II. POINT.

Means of acquiring spiritual-mindedness.

The common enemies of our salvation—our habitual want of recollection—heedlessness concerning our progress in sanctity—the spirit of the world, are without doubt obstacles difficult to overcome; and yet they must be overcome, for they stand in the way of our attaining the wisdom of the Spirit of Jesus, and becoming like-minded with Him. Our hope of resembling Jesus lies in the fact of our increasing in the knowledge and love of Him. *Do we sit at His Feet, and hear His words.* Have we really chosen the better part? if so, Jesus has promised that *it shall not be taken away.* It is ours: and it rests with us (having made the acquisition) to retain it. O hidden life of the spirit! O life celestial and divine! joined to a life of activity, the height of perfection is reached! Lend us your united forces, so that from prayer we may pass to action, and from action to communion with the Beloved of our souls. In order to please Thee by imitating Thine own example, O Jesus, may we not be so attached to the repose of prayer as to forget the spiritual interests of other souls, nor so inclined to follow the impulse of natural activity, as to lose the recollection of God. Let us enter into the recesses of our own hearts, there to treat with Jesus,—and when we have to treat with our neighbour let us still act for Him alone; being ever faithful to the suggestions of His Holy Spirit. Thus shall we maintain in ourselves much peace, and become yet more enamoured of the life which is hidden in God.

COLLOQUY.

O my Jesus, it is to Thee I owe the sublime teaching I

44 NINETEENTH WEEK AFTER PENTECOST.—SATURDAY.

have received concerning the hidden life. Deign to attract me to it more completely, so that I may become truly spiritual-minded. Reveal to me those secrets of Thy grace which Thou reservest for such as delight in Thee, and do Thou, O Lord, *give me the desire of my heart*, which is—that in the midst of my daily duties I may ever remain in conscious union with Thyself, O Heavenly Spouse ; and live with Thy life, *minding the things which are of the Spirit*.

RESOLUTION.

To practise recollection in order to became more spiritual-minded.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

The wisdom of the Spirit is life and peace.

PRAYER.

Soul of Christ.

Nineteenth Week after Pentecost.—Saturday.

The true liberty of the Children of God.

JESUS said to those who believed in Him : If you continue in My word, you shall be My disciples indeed : And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. Whosoever committeth sin, is the servant of sin. If the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed.—S. JOHN VIII.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us hear our Divine Saviour declaring who they are, that can rejoice in true liberty.

II. PRELUDE.

We supplicate Thee, O Jesus, for grace faithfully to keep Thy words ; and so to enjoy the liberty of the children of God.

I. POINT.

True liberty consists in freedom from the slavery of sin.

It is by correcting our faults, and practising the virtues of our holy estate that we place ourselves in a condition of real liberty. It is possessed by all the true children of God ; and is due to their deliverance from the slavery of the passions, of the world, and of the devil. It elevates them above all human fear; and causes them, as the Psalmist expresses it : *to run in the way of God's commandments, when He enlargeth their hearts.* Most true is it, that there is no servitude, no tyranny, equal to that of the passions : if they are permitted to gain the mastery—if they are elected by distinct acts of our free-will to bear rule over us, we shall inevitably rue the consequences, sooner or later. We seem to forget that it is in our power to choose our master. God says to us, as He did to the children of Israel by the mouth of Josue, their saviour from the enemies who harassed them : *If it seem evil to you to serve the Lord, you have your choice: choose that which pleaseth you, whom you would rather serve.* Have we set up any god, whom we have served and obeyed rather than *the Holy God, Who is*.

mighty and jealous? If we would enjoy a happy freedom, pride, self-love, envy, and every other idol must be dethroned ; rebellious nature must be overcome, its inclinations utterly subdued. Jesus emphatically declares that we are incapable of knowing what true liberty is, if we have not enlisted on the side of truth, which shall make us free. *Amen, amen, I say to you : that whosoever committeth sin, is the servant of sin.*

II. POINT.

The liberty of the children of God.

Nothing ought to be easier, or a more ordinary fact, than that Christians should consider God as their Father, and behave towards Him with all confidence, simplicity, and self-abandonment. Such is the manifest intention of the new law. The title—children of God—which is ours, pre-supposes that we shall not be oblivious of the principal Object of our faith ; but that His Fatherhood may be the highest motive of our love and obedience. And yet, nothing it is to be feared is rarer than a real filial love towards God—*that perfect charity which casteth out fear.* Whence comes it that often in our way of thinking and speaking of Him, in the irksome constraint that marks some service done for Him, there is distinctly a larger proportion of fear than of love ? Does this not arise from a painful consciousness of our failures in duty, as children of so good a Father ? We have not been true to Him ; an estrangement has grown up ; and though the fault of the estrangement is, of course, all our own, we actually distrust Him, and no longer look up to Him with childlike confidence. How we wrong Him in this way ! we are allowing self-love to deceive us, by persuading us that our interests are not safe in His hands. It

strengthens our natural desire of independence, foolishly so called ; and weakens filial confidence in Him, on Whom alone we can safely depend. True it is, that when all goes well according to our narrow, short-sighted views, we grant that God is taking fatherly care of us ; but when deprived of honour, esteem, temporal or spiritual blessings, then we so often grow distrustful about His knowing better than ourselves what is really for our good. The secret of true liberty lies in this—absolute, undeviating trust in the wisdom and love of the Heavenly Father.

COLLOQUY.

Thy service, O God, is true liberty—in the accomplishing of Thy Will is the enjoyment of freedom. I thank Thee for having, by the aid of Thy grace, delivered me from the tyrannical power of Satan : I have chosen Thee to be my Master, I will use every endeavour to prove myself faithful to Thee. *Having looked into the perfect law of liberty, I resolve to continue therein, and to do the work Thou appointest me, simply out of love, and gratitude for Thy great goodness towards me. I pray Thee, look upon me and have mercy on me : give Thy command to Thy servant, O Lord.*

RESOLUTION.

Often to renew my choice of serving the Divine Master.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

PRAYER.

Take, O Lord, and receive.

Twentieth Week after Pentecost.—Sunday.

The effects of the cure of the Ruler's son.

The Ruler himself believed, and his whole house.—S. JOHN IV.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us picture to ourselves the house of the Ruler at Capharnaum, and witness the results of the cure of his son.

II. PRELUDE.

O God, may we delight in tracing out the far-spreading consequences of Thy gifts of grace, and thank Thee for them as we perceive their effects in ourselves and others.

I. POINT.

That great results arise from apparently unimportant circumstances.

In the heart of the ruler at Capharnaum was implanted a little germ of faith in the power of the God-Man, over bodily disease. How silently, how hiddenly was this effected by Divine grace, and by what simple exterior means! The tidings that Jesus had left Samaria and was now in Galilee fell upon his ear, and the thought came into his mind (as a gift from the unseen Giver of all good thoughts) that as He had wrought one miracle in Galilee, so it was not impossible that Jesus should now work another on behalf of his son. It was doubtless a mere natural sentiment of grief on his

account, that quickened this desire to lay the case before the Divine Physician, Who often visits us also, with sorrow and affliction to make us feel our need of His succour. But having aroused this sense of our helplessness, God deals with us as He did with the ruler : He demands an increase of our faith in Himself, not such as might be called forth by some direct and dazzling manifestation of His power, or by some extraordinary display of signs and wonders ; but a simple belief, which is ready to leave the ways and means of relief entirely in His hands. How grateful we should be that God gives us the spirit of faith, and then exercises it by degrees in order to strengthen it, and augment our merits. The nobleman had evidently supposed that our Lord's power was limited, with regard to the circumstances of time and place ; for he importuned Him greatly to come down as far as Capharnaum—and before his son died. Notwithstanding all our daily, innumerable opportunities of assuring ourselves of the infinitude of God's power, do we not set bounds to it on one side or another very often, and prove that we are still wanting in perfect faith ?

II. POINT.

The multiplying of God's gifts and blessings.

Manifold and eternal benedictions were sealed to this ruler by means of the lessons conveyed to him by Jesus. He taught him how to submit his own will, and obey the command to return to his home unaccompanied by Him, Whom he had travelled so far to seek. Our Lord caused the virtue of humility to take root in the heart of this suppliant ; who by going back again to his home full of hope, acknowledged his belief in the Divine attributes of the

Saviour. He had opportunities afforded him of practising also patience and resignation. The reward of his fidelity to grace was nearer at hand than he imagined, for Jesus had planned for him the happiness of hearing the confirmation of His declaration that his prayer was fully answered, even before his homeward journey was ended. In considering this episode we perceive how one virtue is necessarily followed by others, so closely are they linked together : how God's gifts and graces are entwined. The sequel shews that the ruler *himself believed and his whole house*. We may well imagine with what joy this family welcomed Jesus, when a short time after He arrived in Capharnaum. *He had prevented them with blessings*, and perceiving their faith and gratitude, He gave them the benediction of His visible Presence. The thought of the way in which God multiplies His favours where rightly used, ought to encourage us greatly to avail ourselves of each. The remembrance of the influence for good every individual may exert, and of our inter-dependence in the matter of advancing in holiness, should make us seriously consider what we are doing to promote, not only our own salvation, but also the salvation of others.

COLLOQUY.

O Lord God, when I look back at my past life how have I to thank Thee for the gift of faith bestowed on me so freely, without which it would have been impossible for me to please Thee. May I, like the ruler in the Gospel, go to Thee, believing in Thy power, *and that Thou art a Rewarder of them that seek Thee*. Though Thou dost exercise my patience, and try my faith, may I resign myself to Thy Will, feeling sure that Thou knowest what is best for me. And grant that seeing my faith co-operate with my

works, others may be attracted to a higher belief in Thee : and to trust in that goodness more entirely, to which we owe all hope of future glory.

RESOLUTION.

Carefully to follow every inspiration of God's grace, and leave results in His hands.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

By works faith is made perfect.

PRAYER.

Our Father, and Hail Mary.

Twentieth Week after Pentecost.—Monday.

The parable of the Talents.

A man, going into a far country, called his servants, and delivered to them his goods. And to one he gave five talents, and to another two, and to another one: to every one according to his proper ability: and immediately he took his journey.—S. MATT. xxv.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves Jesus as the Man Who is now in a far country, and Who, having bestowed on us certain gifts, will one day require us to give an account of them.

II. PRELUDE.

Fill our hearts, O Lord, with lively gratitude for the talents
Thou hast confided to our care, and may we use them
faithfully for the increase of Thy glory.

I. POINT.

We should employ the gifts both of nature and grace to
the glory of God.

God has created us for His glory, and to make us sharers
in His happiness : all gifts whether natural or supernatural
are so many talents of which we are to increase the value by
using them in the accomplishing of His designs. All the
good that is in us we must refer to Him, for it comes from
Him ; and it is not to gain human esteem for ourselves that
He makes us a grant of our respective talents, but to extend
His kingdom, each one according to his proper ability. To
gifts of nature He adds those of grace, infinitely more
precious ; the true teaching of the Church, the Sacraments,
interior illumination, holy guidance, good examples, and a
multitude of other favours attached to a religious life. If
God were to begin to reckon with us concerning the use
made of these our talents at this moment, what should we
be able to answer Him ? Faithful servants give in their
accounts with joy. They, who have received five talents,
have gained other five, over and above ; and they to whom
were delivered two talents, have gained other two. God
has given us faith : where are our works of patience and
charity ? He has shown us the hideousness of sin—where
are our victories over our passions, vices, and temptations ?
We have been surrounded by good examples : where are our
fruits of humility and zeal ? We have been members of

His Holy Church : what use have we made of the Sacraments ? Jesus has spoken to us of His great love : where are our acts of mortification for His Sake ? where our sacrifices ? are we preparing to bring Him *double money in our hands ?*

II. POINT.

God only requires an account of the gifts He has actually bestowed on each one individually.

To one He gave five talents, and to another two, and to another one. God dispenses His gifts with wisdom : He proportions them to the designs He has in regard to each one of us : therefore the number and nature of these gifts may vary in an infinite degree. But that which ought to encourage us to serve Him with fidelity, and to trust in His goodness is, that He will act with perfect justice ; and provided we have rightly employed the talents actually delivered into our keeping, we shall receive the reward of His commendation : *Well done, good and faithful servant.* He who accounted for five talents, and he who accounted for two, heard the same words from their master : *Because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will place thee over many things : enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.* How happy should we esteem ourselves to be the subjects, the servants of so good a King as is the Lord our God, Who metes out His rewards, not according to the supposed importance or greatness of our good works, but in proportion to the loyalty of our duty done for Him in that very position, in the midst of those very circumstances, in which He has placed us : only *our trading* must be incessant till our Lord return. And never may we suppose we have nothing to do for God. No excuses will avail us in that

Great Day of Account ; if we have hidden our talent in the earth—through sloth or negligence—through indifference arising from ingratitude and forgetfulness of our responsibilities, we shall not escape the punishment of the unprofitable servant. Let us examine ourselves, and henceforth do our best to double the value of every gift, so that Jesus at His Coming to judge the world *may receive His own from us with usury.*

COLLOQUY.

I adore Thee, O Jesus my Lord, and thank Thee for the talents Thou hast bestowed on me. I bless Thee alike for Thy mercy and Thy justice ; they call forth my zeal and confidence. How infinite is the Wisdom which Thou dost manifest in the distribution of Thy various gifts of nature and of grace ! Whilst I grieve that I have wasted so many opportunities of increasing their value, I resolve to employ them from this time forward only in Thy immediate service ; remembering that *into whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required.* If tempted to grow indifferent or weary, let me encourage myself with the assurance that : *yet a little while, and a very little while, and He that is to come, will come, and will not delay.*

RESOLUTION.

Often to examine the accounts I shall have to render to God.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

They shall receive double in their Land : everlasting joy shall be unto them.

PRAYER.

Our Father, and Hail Mary.

Twentieth Week after Pentecost.—Tuesday.

The value of solid virtue.

JESUS said to His Disciples : Rejoice not in this, that spirits are subject unto you ; but rejoice in this, that your names are written in Heaven.—S. LUKE x.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us hear our Lord saying that He had given to the seventy-two Disciples many supernatural powers, and yet that they should rather rejoice in the thought that *their names were written in Heaven.*

II. PRELUDE.

Give us grace to exercise ourselves in the practice of real and hidden virtues, which alone can assure to us the possession of the eternal Kingdom.

I. POINT.

We should prefer unseen acts of virtue to such as may be ostentatious, and become a mere display of vanity.

Our Divine Master gives us this lesson when He reprobates the Disciples for the undue self-satisfaction they manifested, when they found that they had power over demons. *Rejoice not that devils are subject to you*, He said, *but rejoice that your names are written in Heaven*, by these words putting us on our guard against vanity, which is too often the

result (to ourselves) of our own good actions, and deeds of virtue which are witnessed and extolled by men. Hidden virtues do not subject us to the same danger: practised in the concealment of a simple interior life, they are so genuine that they acquire for us real merit: the gnawing worm of vain-glory cannot eat away the core of the beautiful fruit of true humility. It is to the exercise of solid, unobtrusive excellence that the Divine Master would have us apply ourselves; that His hidden life at Nazareth may be reproduced in us. He who possessed power over every creature in Heaven, on earth, and under the earth, practised in all their perfection, the virtues of poverty of spirit, unquestioning obedience, calm modesty, and loving, silent, unbroken intercourse with God. Ostentation played no part in the Life of our Lord; and yet *we* are well-pleased that our goodness should be appreciated, our merits acknowledged, our virtues admired: is it not so? O Jesus! draw us into the retreat of the hidden life, where Thou alone art the witness of those best acts of virtue, which result from love and thankfulness to Thee—*because our names are written in Heaven.*

II. POINT.

Value of hidden virtues.

Wishing that to our exterior works of zeal, we should join the practice of unpretending interior acts of virtue, Jesus by His words to His Disciples: *Rejoice not because the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice in this, that your names are written in Heaven,* not only represses our too natural inclination to draw attention to ourselves, but they strike at the root of a great evil—a great hindrance to true spirituality—that is to say, the crowding out of higher by the multiplicity

of lower motives. The visible is allowed to over-rule the invisible : joy and self-congratulation spring from the pride of power, of authority, of personal influence, of some observable success : such feelings are excited (generally may we not say?) through the praise and renown accorded by the world's verdict. What an injustice it is to have entered God's service, to have had our names enrolled by the Angels in the archives of Heaven, and then to accept the base coin of earthly, selfish gratification, which bribes us, as it were, not to acknowledge that of ourselves we are utterly unable to do anything truly praiseworthy. Let us begin to despise more thoroughly the maxims of the world, and shunning all parade and ostentation, seek to be unknown—forgotten. Then shall we rightly understand the true, and only true joy of being satisfied with the Heavenly Father's approbation—so perfectly satisfied, that there will be no room in our hearts left for the world's applause.

COLLOQUY.

Put into my heart, O God, a greater love for unobtrusive goodness, and preserve me from the deceitfulness of the world's approbation, and of self-praise. May I place a higher value on those virtues which are observed only by Thee ; the practice of which assures to me the certainty of Thy approval. May I rejoice in the hope that, while my work for Thee is unnoticed and unappreciated by the world, my name is written in the book of life. I know that Thou, *Who seest in secret, will repay* all that is done for Thy glory alone.

RESOLUTION.

Often to thank God in the joy of my heart that *my name is written in Heaven.*

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

My Father, who seeth in secret, will repay.

PRAYER.

Soul of Christ.

Twentieth Week after Pentecost.—Wednesday.

Jesus in the house of Zacheus.

There was a man named Zacheus: who was the chief of the publicans, and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus who He was, and he could not for the crowd, because he was low of stature. And running before he climbed up into a sycamore-tree that he might see Him: for He was to pass that way. And when Jesus was come to the place, looking up, He saw him, and said to him: Zacheus, make haste and come down: for this day I must abide in thy house. And he made haste and came down, and received Him with joy.—S. LUKE. xix.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves the entrance of Jesus into the city of Jericho, surrounded by so great a crowd that Zacheus, in order to see Him, climbed up into a sycamore-tree.

II. PRELUDE.

Give us grace, O Lord, to imitate the fervour of Zacheus, and like him co-operate with Thy grace instantly.

I. POINT.

The goodness of Jesus towards Zacheus.

This chief of the publicans, notoriously a sinner, having heard of Jesus and His wonderful works, manifested the greatest possible desire to see Him. To the Heart of Jesus it was too small a favour to accord only the realisation of this desire : this passing gratification was not an adequate recompense for one who so pains-takingly sought Him. When our Lord drew near to the sycamore-tree into which Zacheus had climbed, He would not pass him by unnoticed ; but casting upon him a look of kindness, spoke to him by name : *Zacheus, make haste and come down, for this day I must abide at thy house.* What force is this which obliges Jesus to go thither ? It is the power of His love for sinners. Having discovered in this publican so good a will, He acted as He ever acts when He finds hearts prepared to receive Him. Has He not often looked upon us in His mercy ? Have not we too been the objects of His regard ? Has not His gentle Voice made itself heard in the depths of our soul, and filled us with holy joy ? How many times has He not said to us : *To-day I must abide in thy house ?* Have we responded to this gracious indication of His desire, by promptly preparing to entertain Jesus as our Guest ? *Zacheus made haste and came down, and received Him with joy.*

II. POINT.

The debt of gratitude we owe to our Lord.

When we desire to know more of Jesus, we, who are *low of stature*—whose growth in goodness is greatly stunted perhaps, must energetically strive to rise above the world

and (as Saint Bede expresses it) climb up into the sycamore-tree of the wisdom of the Saints ; thence we shall obtain a better, clearer view of Him, Whom we long to contemplate. Our endeavours will not be unsuccessful ; and moreover Jesus blesses every effort made for His sake, in ways far beyond our most sanguine expectations. *He will come to us and make His abode with us. . . .* As Jesus proves His love for us more and more abundantly, are we showing our gratitude according to the example of Zacheus ? *What shall I render to the Lord, for all the things that He hath rendered to me?* was evidently the first inquiry of his grateful heart. The necessity of testifying his thankfulness by means of sacrifice and reparation, he intuitively felt, and immediately made a solemn promise that *he would give half of his goods to the poor; and that if he had wronged any man of anything, he would restore four-fold.* It is a sign of a true conversion, of the sincerity of our love for God, when we are ready to make a sacrifice of that to which we have been unduly attached ; are willing to offer reparation for the injury we may have done our neighbour—the wrong committed by us against God's honour. Shall *we* do less than this fervent neophyte ? Having known Jesus so much longer, having been well instructed in all that relates to Him, having already received so many proofs of His love and goodness towards us, are we content that Zacheus should out-do us in gratitude? and, that in one short day he should be more advanced in the science of pleasing Jesus than we are, after so many years of acquaintance with Him ?

COLLOQUY.

O my Adorable Master ! how is it that I am so little grateful, notwithstanding the great and numberless benefits

I have received from Thee? The consideration of the example of Zacheus makes me ashamed of the cold reception I have so often given Thee—of the little desire I manifest to please Thee. Give me grace, to use greater energy in seeking means to know more of Thy Divine perfections: look upon me in Thy mercy, and speak to me of Thy gracious intention to abide with me; so that my heart may respond to Thy loving designs, and promptly obey the dictates of gratitude, by making acts of sacrifice and reparation to the utmost of my power. I can never do enough for Thee, O Jesus! but henceforth I will strive to do more than I have hitherto done, in proof of my thankfulness.

RESOLUTION.

To be more practical with regard to my promises to God.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

PRAYER.

O Jesus, living in Mary.

Twentieth Week after Pentecost.—Thursday.

The sanctity of God's own House.

We will go into His Tabernacle, we will adore in the place where His Feet stood. . . . Entering into the Temple, Jesus began to cast out them that sold therein and them that bought; saying to them: My house is the house of prayer.—PSALM CXXXI. . . . S. LUKE XIX.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves Jesus after having driven out the profaners of the Temple, standing in the midst of the people and quoting the words of the prophet : *Is this house then, in which God's Name hath been called upon, in your eyes become a den of robbers?*

II. PRELUDE.

Inspire us, O Lord God, with profound respect for the holy places honoured by Thy Presence : inspire us also with great zeal in adorning our souls with every virtue, since Thou dwellest likewise in them.

I. POINT.

The King of Heaven dwells amongst the children of men.

What an honour God confers on us in choosing a place on earth wherein to dwell in an especial manner ! There is nothing that proves more distinctly the holiness of our religion than the glorious privilege which is ours, of possessing Sanctuaries which God inhabits, and into which we may enter and enjoy the corporeal Presence of the Incarnate Word. How great a miracle ! what wonderful goodness on the part of God ! In His own House He is ever to be found : indeed He meets us on the threshold and warns us not to carry within its sacred precincts aught that may rob Him of our thoughts and affections. He is waiting to speak with us : within its walls we may purify our souls, and cleanse them in the Precious Blood of the Adorable Victim that is daily immolated there. There we may receive Him

into our hearts in the Sacrament of His Love, and rejoice before Him as He pours His blessings upon us. Has He not declared that *having given us in His house, and within His walls, a place and a name better than of sons and daughters, He will also give us an everlasting name which shall never perish.* Often should we renew in ourselves feelings of liveliest gratitude and of profound veneration towards Him, Who thus deigns to admit us in His immediate Presence; and question our hearts as to whether we derive joy and happiness from the visits we daily pay in His Courts? Are our thoughts directed entirely to Him during the time we spend in His Temple? Is our respectful demeanour, our pious modesty, edifying to others? Or have we not just reason to ask pardon for the poor attention we have often given Him, *Who is high above the kings of earth?* and for having behaved with less courtesy towards Jesus, in the House which He calls His own, than we should towards the noble and the great of this world? Do we treat Him thus, because He is so condescending? so easy of access to all?

II. POINT.

The Great All-holy God dwells in us—we are His temples.

In Holy Baptism every Christian has received solemn consecration, and has by this means become the temple of the Blessed Trinity. How careful should each one be to see that God is therein duly honoured and faithfully served! Such a temple is most sacred, being inhabited by the Deity, and dedicated to Him: it should be the abode of tranquillity and silence, out of reverence for the Divine Majesty there present—it should be the home of holy prayer and praise. But the distinctive point which characterises a

temple is the altar, with its sacrifices. Our bodies being, as Saint Paul says, *the temples of the Holy Ghost*, do we keep them pure and undefiled? Can God take delight in dwelling in our souls? Are all our thoughts, our desires, our sentiments worthy of Him? Are we habitually recollected, so that we can hear the voice of His holy inspirations? On the altar of our hearts, whence should arise the incense of prayer and praise, do we present holocausts acceptable to Him? Are we faithful in offering the sacrifices He asks of us, with a ready will? O Adorable Jesus, help us each one, to cast out of the temple of our soul and body all that may offend Thee, reserving it entirely, interiorly and exteriorly, for Thy holy service: *a habitation of God in the Spirit*, of which Thou mayst say: *here will I dwell, for I have chosen it.*

COLLOQUY.

How is it possible to praise Thee as I ought, O God, for having deigned to fix Thy abode on the earth in the midst of Thy children! How can I thank Thee enough for having consecrated my heart to be a sanctuary in which Thou art pleased to dwell! I will renew my Baptismal vows, which remind me that I am not my own; and the promises I have since made of giving up my whole being entirely to Thy service. Purify my outward senses and my innermost thoughts, so that nothing in them may displease Thee. Keep alive on the altar of my heart the flame of divine love, and may I offer daily sacrifices, acceptable to Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

RESOLUTION.

In holy places to remember the more immediate Presence of God.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

How lovely are Thy Tabernacles, Thou Lord of Hosts !

PRAYER.

Our Father, and Hail Mary.

Twentieth Week after Pentecost.—Friday.

The practice of certain virtues which Jesus particularly recommends.

Freely have you received, freely give.—S. MATT. x.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves our Blessed Lord surrounded by His Apostles, to whom, when sending them forth to the conquest of souls, He says : *Freely have you received, freely give.*

II. PRELUDE.

Give us grace, O Jesus, to meditate with fruit, on the recommendation to practise solid virtue, which is embodied in these words addressed by Thee to Thy Apostles.

I. POINT.

The recommendation to practise zealous charity, in the spirit of gratitude.

Although few, comparatively speaking, are called openly and directly to do the work of an Apostle, yet all Christians should desire to take some part in the extending of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, by the conversion of sinners. There are in the midst of the world even, some who fully understand that they are called to this ministry of charity: it may be in a way that is hidden from the eyes of men, and known to God alone. Nevertheless they are carrying out the injunction of our Lord : *Freely have you received, freely give.* They are filled with loving gratitude towards Him, and evince it by their zeal and charity. To God they offer fervent prayers and frequent sufferings. They impose upon themselves mortifications, penances, sacrifices ; and all this for the conversion of sinners, for the propagation or re-establishment of the faith, for the success of others' labours. Are not such souls truly apostolic? Have they not as great, perhaps a greater, share in the work of bringing wanderers into the Fold of Christ, as those who appear more actively engaged? And this way of proving our gratitude for what we have received is open to us all. What is our zeal? where are our mortifications? our prayers? our sacrifices? Can it be that we are passing our lives in indifference about the saving of even a single soul? Are we going to remain always so cold concerning the glory of God?—the sanctification of ourselves and others? Jesus Christ Himself did more for the salvation of the human race by interior suffering, by the intensity of His prayers, by the painfully loving desires of His Sacred Heart, than by His exterior labours and torments. And we, in union with Him, may thus toil and endure silently, but effectively; and become associates with Him in the work of redemption. O God! deliver us from that spirit of egotism, which concentrates us in *self*. Give us to understand how pleasing to Thee

is that zeal which springs from gratitude ; and continually produces deeds, both hidden and evident, of divine charity.

II. POINT.

The recommendation to practise zealous charity, in the spirit of humility and poverty.

Each one of us has received some particular gift to enable us to accomplish, and that successfully, the work God sets us to do for Him. These gifts are absolutely gratis ; and God has thus freely enriched us, that we may not be tempted to forget that we must always remain poor in spirit, dependent for their continuance on His bounty. All we do for others must be done with humility—we have nothing of our own to give them, *for what have we that we have not received?* Jesus desires that we employ the means placed at our disposal of succouring the weak, teaching the ignorant, reclaiming the sinful, with humbleness of mind ; without seeking in any way our own glory. We do well to remember that the conversion of souls is a work which God only can effect ; and it is He alone that *giveth the increase*, when we have *planted and watered*. But the more we do, and the more we give, the more will our efforts and sacrifices be crowned with success. We often wish to keep so much back for ourselves ; this is not acting in obedience to the command : *Freely give*. Poverty of spirit—detachment—is a most necessary virtue for us, if we desire to gain souls for God. We must be truly sanctified ourselves, and such poverty is the basis of perfection. It also cannot fail to sanctify others, and inspire them with a just contempt for the world and its delusions. One who is really and gladly convinced that he possesses nothing of his own, and

who wishes to possess nothing save Jesus Christ, is capable of doing great things. God alone is his All. Are our thoughts, our aims, our desires consecrated to the work of extending His Kingdom ?

COLLOQUY.

Thou desirest, O Jesus, that I should sanctify myself, and labour, silently at least, in promoting the sanctification of souls Thou hast redeemed at the price of Thy most Precious Blood. Why is it that I am not actuated by greater zeal and charity, when I have received freely so much at Thy Hands ? I have done but little in Thy cause, O Lord, because I am too selfish and vain-glorious. But do Thou empty me of myself, and fill me with Thyself, that I may henceforth seek Thy interests; and freely give back Thy gifts to Thee, by spending them for others' good.

RESOLUTION.

To gain souls for God in ways known only to Him.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

God loveth a cheerful giver.

PRAYER.

Our Father, and Hail Mary.

Twentieth Week after Pentecost.—Saturday.

The difficulty of curing habitual faults.

JESUS said to the father whose son was tormented by a deaf and dumb spirit: How long is it since this hath happened unto him? He said: From his infancy: If Thou canst do anything, help us, having compassion on us: And JESUS said: Deaf and dumb spirit, I command Thee go out of the boy, and enter not any more into him: The Disciples asked JESUS secretly: Why could we not cast him out? And JESUS said to them: This kind can go out by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.—S. MARK IX.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves how the Disciples vainly endeavoured to exorcise this evil spirit, and how it immediately obeyed the command of Jesus.

II. PRELUDE.

O Lord, may we use the means inspired by Thy grace, so that, aided by Thy assistance, the enemies of our salvation may be rendered powerless to do us harm.

L POINT.

There are certain defects which it is extremely difficult to eradicate.

Jesus asked of the father of the child, how long he had been under the power of the fiend that tormented him.

The reply was: *From his infancy.* There are many defects of which we find it peculiarly difficult to correct ourselves; but chiefly those that have in our early years gained the mastery, and have perhaps been permitted to grow into habits of sin. Oh, what resistance they offer, when we begin in earnest to free ourselves from their power! how they torment us, when we oppose their force, and make acts of their contrary virtues! And yet, notwithstanding the various failures we may experience, let us not lose courage; in the end they will be extirpated, by means of strict mortification and earnest prayer—lively faith and firm trust in God. We need not waste our time in astonishment, when we find that it tests (and that painfully) our patience and perseverance, our energy and courage to overcome self on one particular point, to correct a single pernicious habit: for what else can we expect, if during a long period, perhaps from our infancy, we have followed no plan of resistance against our spiritual foes. Defects of character, natural tendencies towards evil, and sometimes the obstinate hardihood of a grievous sin's tyranny, have to be met—suppressed—defeated. To secure this success we have but to seek the assistance of Jesus—and though they may have often cast us into the fire of trying temptation, and the waters of despair, He Whose grace is all-sufficient, *will help us and have compassion upon us.*

II. POINT.

It is by prayer and mortification that defects are overcome.

We learn that the Apostles, having failed in their endeavours to cast out the evil spirit from the boy, questioned their Master as to the cause of their inability to do so, and He told them them this was due to their incredulity: for

faith alone, testifying to its reality by fervour and mortification, can effect great things for God. If we ask Him : *Why could not we cast out* this or that fault, eradicate such or such an evil propensity, He gives us the same response : *Because of your unbelief, if you have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, nothing shall be impossible to you.* : *This kind is not cast out, but by prayer and fasting.* Yes ! to prayer must be joined mortification : *by works faith is made perfect.* Exterior mortification obliges us to observe religiously the fasting and abstinence prescribed by the Church, and to refrain one's self from all sensuality. It requires us as Christians, to lead sober and regular lives; practising self-denial in the subduing of the flesh, and by bringing the body into subjection. Interior mortification tends to subjugate the mind and spirit, in a direct and uniform manner, to God. It is far more necessary than the outward practice of austerities, and far more difficult : for all within the soul has to be kept in check, passions thwarted, tendencies arising from original corruption repressed and crushed out. All this mass of work to be effected, might assume such vast proportions in our imagination, as to cause us alarm ; but by prayer and mortification (resulting from faith) Jesus assures us we can do all things : *You shall say to this mountain, remove from hence, and it shall remove: and nothing shall be impossible to you.*

COLLOQUY.

O Jesus, I understand that if I had more faith, if I depended more entirely on Thy grace, nothing would be impossible ; and that I should be able to remove even an accumulation of spiritual difficulties, by means of prayer and mortification. Help me henceforth to pray more, and to

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live in greater conformity to Thy Divine Will. I know that the enemy seeks again and again to exert his baneful influence; but in the way pointed out by Thee, enable me to free myself from it at all times. Distrusting myself let me trust in Thee alone, my Strength and my Defender.

RESOLUTION.

To exercise myself more thoroughly in prayer and mortification.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

This kind is not cast out but by prayer and fasting.

PRAYER.

Our Father, and Hail Mary.

Twenty-first Week after Pentecost.—Sunday.

The Parable of the Servant who was insolvent.

The Kingdom of Heaven is likened to a king, who would take an account of his servants: And when he had begun to take the account, one was brought to him that owed him ten thousand talents: And as he had not wherewith to pay it, his lord commanded that he should be sold, and his wife and his children and all that he had, and payment to be made: But that servant falling down besought him saying: Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.—S. MATT. xviii.

I. PRELUDE.

We represent to ourselves Jesus Christ, as He taught His Disciples that the King of Heaven and earth will take an account of His servants.

II. PRELUDE.

O Lord, enable us by Thy grace so to understand Thy instructions, that we may be prepared to render a good account of our lives whenever Thou shalt demand it.

I. POINT.

We are all debtors to God.

The Church begins to draw our thoughts to the day when God will bring all things that we have done into judgment. He will punish severely not only those who shall have wasted His goods—His gifts, but those also who shall have neglected to use them profitably. The Divine Judge will examine into all our sins, our negligences, our failures in duty. *He searcheth even the hearts of the upright*, weighth good works in the balance of the sanctuary, and discovereth if there be anything defective in them. Well may we with Job exclaim: *What shall I do when God shall rise to judge ? and when He shall examine, what shall I answer Him ?* When He, the Just One, calls us to render an exact account of our good and evil deeds, how many talents shall not we owe Him?—He will inquire what use we have made of all the means of grace placed at our disposal: what fruit we have reaped from our confessions, our communions, our many opportunities of laying up stores of merits wherewith to pay our debts. Let us own how deeply we are involved, and beg of

God that *He enter not into judgment with us*, before we have made better amends for our many delinquencies. *And if the just man shall scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?* We may never forget under what obligations we lie, with regard to God's justice—how great our spiritual liabilities are; but on the other hand we know that *if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity.*

II. POINT.

The means we should use to obtain a favourable judgment.

The servant, falling down, besought his lord saying: Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Our Lord further teaches us by this parable the means we should use to satisfy the strict demands of our Judge, *Who is just, strong, and patient.* We are so poor in merits, so incapable of paying what we owe. We cannot do better than did the servant that was insolvent: humble ourselves before our Good Lord, Who will never reject such as feel their own nothingness, and are penetrated with a keen sense of their sinfulness and unworthiness. Secondly: in order to find grace with God we must pray fervently. *The servant besought his lord.* The God of all goodness is pitiful to those who call upon Him. Thirdly: we should turn to Him for assistance with confidence, for we cannot depend too much upon His mercy; if we are truly wishful to do all we can to render ourselves more worthy in future, of His favours, His compassion will not fail us. Fourthly: there must be a sincere desire and resolve, to make satisfaction to the utmost of our power by penance. *Have patience with me, and I will pay Thee all:* this too we may

say—not in a spirit of presumption, but in a spirit of perfect confidence in Jesus Christ, to the Treasury of Whose merits we may constantly have recourse. In union with His great, His infinite merits, our little merits become of value in the sight of God. . . . We know that through want of forbearance and charity towards another, the servant lost the benefits of his lord's remission of his heavy debt: this should make us understand that our Heavenly Father expects us to forgive the failings of our brethren, if we hope for a continuance of His favour.

COLLOQUY.

Thou hast taught me to-day, O Lord, how I may find grace with Thee; and avoid the rigour of Thy judgments. At Thy Feet I cast myself, and avow that I cannot possibly satisfy Thy justice, for I am poor and miserable, and have nothing of my own. May I prove nevertheless my willingness to do what I can, by turning to good account the many graces Thou dost bestow on me, and by doing all my actions in a spirit of love and of penance. Do Thou now cancel my past debts, I beseech Thee; and may I be always able to pray with all sincerity: *Forgive me my sins, for I also forgive every one that is indebted to me.*

RESOLUTION.

Often to offer to God the merits of Jesus Christ, in payment of my debts.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Have patience with me, O Lord.

PRAYER.

Our Father, and Hail Mary.

Twenty-first Week after Pentecost.—Monday.

Jesus Christ lays down His Law of Love.

JESUS said to the eleven Apostles : A new commandment I give unto you : That you love one another : as I have loved you, that you also love one another.—S. JOHN XIII.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us enter the Coenaculum where Jesus and all the Apostles (except Judas) are sitting together after the institution of the Holy Eucharist.

II. PRELUDE.

O Jesus, let us remain near Thee, as Thou dost discourse with Thy Disciples on the last evening before Thy Death ; and may we listen to Thy words with deepest reverence.

I. POINT.

The characteristics of the love of Jesus.

Our Divine Saviour was on the eve of leaving this world ; before the morrow should have passed away, His Body would be lying in the Tomb, and His soul would have gone to *preach to the spirits in prison*. He desired before His separation from His Disciples, to give them a clearer understanding concerning His law of charity. After partaking with them of the Last Supper, He thus began His discourse : *Little children, yet a little while I am with you.*

. . . . The time was indeed short, and the first thing Jesus would impress upon His children was this : *Love one another as I have loved you ; by this shall all men know that you are My Disciples.* Meditating upon this new commandment, we find it to be an epitome of the whole law : considering it in all its comprehensiveness, the characteristics of the charity of Jesus are unfolded before our view. His love towards us is most pure : it proceeds not from the desire of procuring His own happiness, but from that of rendering us happy by communicating to us those true joys, of which He is the Source. In His love there is fore-thought : while we were His enemies He descended from Heaven to seek us and gain our hearts. *He first hath loved us.* His love is generous : it has cost Jesus humiliation, toil, torments, and death. It is unvarying : our numberless offences cannot enfeeble it : It is provident : at the moment when He must go forth to die, in His infinite wisdom He effected His plan for remaining on earth, in the Blessed Sacrament. It crowns us with benediction : for us the charity of Jesus has triumphed over hell, opened Heaven ; repaired the loss we have incurred, of God's favour ; and merited for us infinite grace.

II. POINT.

Our charity should resemble that of our Lord.

The charity recommended by Jesus, is to be practised by His Disciples out of obedience to His express wish, that our love one for another should be like His for us. We see how far this precept leads us on ! Our love is to resemble the love of the Incarnate God. Jesus could not command an impossibility, therefore the measure of charity He pre-

scribes must not alarm nor daunt us. The Sacred Heart will enlighten us on this matter of paramount importance, will teach us how to love, and enkindle in our hearts Its Own Divine fire. Jesus asks of us charity—disinterested, magnanimous, universal—which will cause us to sacrifice (in order to promote the eternal welfare of souls) our own likings and natural inclinations. He wills that we purify our affections, having for our neighbour a well-ordered love, sanctified by Divine Love and conducive to holiness. It behoves us to examine ourselves closely as to how we fulfil our Lord's precept on charity : it is so clear, so exhaustive: old indeed, yet ever new. Happy are we if we are putting it into practice ; for how much good may we not effect if we are penetrated with the loving Spirit of our Dear Master. *Little children*, He says again to us to-day : *love one another*. How, Lord ? we may ask. *As I have loved you*.

COLLOQUY.

O Loving Jesus ! I must needs tell Thee the delight I experience, in hearing again from Thy divine Lips this new commandment of love. How sublime is Thy precept of charity ! Thy last wishes are enfolded in it. I adore and reverence it, and desire that my heart may be filled with charity like unto Thine. By Thy grace, I will study Thy Sacred Heart ; and in imitating Its perfect love, prove myself Thy true disciple ; and accomplish Thy wishes, O Lord, in the spirit of my holy vocation.

RESOLUTION.

I will seek to make my charity resemble that of Jesus.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

From a sincere heart, love one another earnestly.

PRAYER.

O Jesus, living in Mary.

Twenty-first Week after Pentecost.—Tuesday.

Peace insured by true belief in God.

Let not your heart be troubled : you believe in God, believe also in Me.—S. JOHN XIV.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us, at the Feet of Jesus, meditate the words of peace He addresses to His Apostles and to us.

II. PRELUDE.

Adorable Saviour, to Thee do we come to learn how and where to find true peace: grant it to us, O Lord, and may we, by Thy grace, never lose it.

I. POINT.

Jesus bids the Disciples not to be troubled.

Here is another proof of the charity of the Master! He is the God of peace—of that eternal peace which is the source of His happiness, and that of all the blessed in

Heaven. He desired that His Disciples should enjoy holy tranquillity even in the midst of that great tribulation, which must be their portion as followers of a Crucified God. *Let not your heart be troubled : you believe in God, believe also in Me*: be not alarmed at the trials of faith and courage you will have to undergo: I have told you indeed that I am about to leave you ; that I am to be delivered up to the Jews, who will make Me suffer a cruel death ; nevertheless, let not these events trouble your hearts : *you believe in God, believe also in the promise I have given you of My Resurrection, and of the fulfilling of the prophecies concerning Me. Neither let your hearts be troubled when, for My Sake, you shall have persecutions to suffer, reproaches to bear, afflictions to endure ; remain firm in your faith in God, confide in Me, and let your soul repose calmly in My love.* To us Jesus also here speaks, giving the same advice He gave at a time when, sustained by Divine peace, He was going forth to His dread Passion. As we ponder Thy counsel, do Thou, O Lord, confirm us in that interior peace which is the source of true happiness.

II. POINT.

What are the causes of our troubles and anxieties ?

Trouble is opposed to the reign of Jesus in the heart. It makes us oblivious of His goodness, His mercy, and His love : if therefore we can trace out the cause of it, we should assuredly seek to apply a remedy to so great an evil. Trouble is often excited by temptations : the enemy of the servants of God, in order to arrest their progress in virtue, arouses fears concerning the state of their soul, and their eternal destiny. He thus causes agitation and disquietude,

so that they may be drawn into sin. In such a case we should know how to possess our souls in patience. Then is the time to have recourse to God, Whose grace is always sufficient for us ; it will strengthen us in His love and help us courageously to resist evil. . . . When spiritual anxiety arises from our having given way to faults and negligences, still we should not lose interior calmness, but excite in our hearts sincere contrition, and make a firm purpose not to repeat them. . . . If our inward troubles are the consequences of our not rightly understanding how injurious to the spiritual life is an agitated mind, a heart full of disturbed emotions, and of our therefore not keeping in check our natural irritability and immoderate activity, we ought seriously to meditate upon the sad results of these anxieties we have brought upon ourselves, and the manner in which they deprive us of the happiness of communing with God. Placing ourselves in His Presence, directly troubles and difficulties arise, let us beseech Him to still the storms of passion and of vain regrets ; to raise us above every fear, save that of offending Him, and to give us peace.

COLLOQUY.

Thou didst foresee, O Jesus, the danger to which my soul would be exposed, the troubles which would disturb its peace; and Thou hast pointed out the one true safeguard in Thy words of strong consolation: *Let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in Me.* Yes! when assailed by temptation, when my faith and love are severely tested, even when unhappily, I may have offended Thee, keep me from becoming disquieted. I will trust in Thee for the maintaining in my soul of that peace which surpasseth all

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understanding. *Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, grant me Thy peace.*

RESOLUTION.

Not to be in anxiety even about my faults and defects, but to rely on the help of God.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

The God of Hope fill you with all peace and joy in believing.

PRAYER.

Our Father, and Hail Mary.

Twenty-first Week after Pentecost.—Wednesday.

Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

JESUS said : I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life : No man cometh to the Father, but by Me.—S. JOHN XIV.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves Thomas saying to Jesus : *Lord, we know not whither Thou goest, and how can we know the way :* and Jesus replying : *I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.*

II. PRELUDE.

Grant, O Lord, that we may follow Thee in the way that will lead us here into all truth, and hereafter to eternal life.

I. POINT.

Jesus is the Way : we should follow Him.

Jesus, the Saviour of men, by His instructions and His example, traces out for us the way in which we must walk to attain everlasting happiness. On the point of leaving those amongst whom He had sojourned, He said to them : *I am the Way.* Way, most sure—by which none can be lost ; Way, most glorious—in which victory in every combat is ensured ; Way most enticing—for abundant riches, ever-increasing merits, are therein found ; Way, most delightful—for we keep near our Divine Master all along its course. What a consolation is it for us to be able to traverse this land of our exile under His heavenly guidance ; and notwithstanding all the fatigue consequent upon our conflicts with our enemies, to know that if we do not turn aside we shall surely reach the Celestial Country, and enjoy the Vision of the Triune God, through all eternity. Shall we hesitate as to whether we shall persevere in following Jesus or not ? He alone is *the Way* : every other way leads to everlasting death. Could we deliberately choose a path through this life, along which there is no trace of the Foot-steps of the Saviour ? O Thou, Who art the Way that leadeth all who would go to the Father, lead Thou us : make us to progress in the knowledge of Thy love and the imitation of Thy virtues—so that *we may make the voice of*

Thy praise to be heard, because Thou hast set our souls to live, and hast not suffered our feet to be moved.

II. POINT.

Jesus is the Truth and the Life.

Only God could thus speak : *I am the Truth and the Life.* The prophets, all the saints, have spoken and have acted according to truth, but the Incarnate Word alone could declare Himself to be essentially the Truth—the Life. It is He Who communicates the Truth to whatever is true and just ; it is He Who endows His saints with supernatural Life. Drawing near to Jesus, we are enlightened with the pure light of truth ;—in conforming ourselves to His Will, He increases in us the life of grace, which renders us holy, and more worthy of the Divine complacency : in loving Jesus, a sweet intercourse springs up between God and our souls : in approaching our Eucharistic Lord, and feeding upon Him, we participate in His sacramental Life ; and become united to Him in so wonderful a manner, that a closer union could not possibly exist. Each time we fittingly receive Him *Who is the Truth and the Life*, in Holy Communion, we become more like Him ; He makes us more truly His, and prepares us for the realisation of the life of glory in Heaven. Is the Truth of Jesus (which shines forth in perfect reflection in His Spouse the Church) affecting our daily lives ? Is the Life of Jesus which abides in Her continually, so animating us that *we no longer live to ourselves, but unto Him Who died for us and rose again ?*

COLLOQUY.

I thank Thee, O Heavenly Father, for having given

Thy Beloved Son to be the means by which I may go to Thee; for having made known to me this Divine Way. Aided by Thy grace I will follow where Jesus leads—eschew all that is contrary to His teaching, since He is perfect Truth—and by union with Him in the Blessed Sacrament live by His Life, until I reach His Presence where toil and fatigue shall be exchanged for endless rest—where nothing *that maketh a lie can enter*—where the elect shall reign for ever, sharing the glorious life of Him Who is One with Thee, O Father, and with the Holy Spirit, world without end.

RESOLUTION.

To renounce all that may prove an obstacle to my union with Jesus.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

No man cometh to the Father, but by Me.

PRAYER.

Soul of Christ.

Twenty-first Week after Pentecost.—Thursday.

The Promise of Jesus not to abandon His Disciples.

I will not leave you orphans: I will come to you: you shall see Me, because I live, and you shall live.—S. JOHN XIV.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us return to the Upper-Room and hear the consoling promises Jesus makes to His faithful followers.

II. PRELUDE.

Divine Saviour, give us grace to unite ourselves more closely to Thee in the bonds of unalienable love.

I. POINT.

Jesus promises His Disciples that He will not forsake them.

Let us admire the great goodness of our Saviour. Although He was so near the awful reality of His Passion and Death, His Mind was occupied with the thought of how best to console His children, and alleviate the grief of their separation from Him. *I will not leave you orphans*, He says to them : and this promise full of power to strengthen and console, we claim as a promise made to us also. By His Presence in faithful hearts, and by means of the Sacrament of His Love, Jesus remains for ever in the midst of His Church, as a beloved Father amongst His children. The world, taking cognisance only of what is exterior and sensible, perceives Him not—is not worthy to know our Hidden God. Voluntarily blinded to the truth of His promise, it neither finds—nor wishes, nor expects to find Him ; and is therefore left in the darkness of unbelief. Happy children of Jesus ! who know Him, love Him, and merit never to be abandoned by Him. Are we of this family ? are we truly consoled for the privation of

the sensible Presence of Jesus here, by the possession of His Eucharistic Presence, and the indwelling of His Holy Spirit? Are we docile and obedient to His inspirations? Are we growing in grace, on account of the privileges we possess? Are we constantly endeavouring to prove ourselves worthy of the fulfilment of His promise: *I will not leave you orphans.*

II. POINT.

Jesus promises His Disciples that He will give them to understand the mysteries of love, about to be wrought out by Himself in their favour.

Speaking of the time, not far distant, when He should send to them the Paraclete, our Adorable Saviour said to His Apostles: *In that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.* By these words Jesus reveals to us the sublime dignity to which His Incarnation has raised us: He distinctly states that He, the Eternal Word, is united in His Godhead to the Father, being together with Him, but One and the Same God; and as the Word-made-Flesh, He has united His divinity to our human nature. *I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.* What an unspeakable favour is hereby accorded to poor, weak creatures such as we are! Can we grasp any idea of the results of this mysterious union? Jesus says: *You shall know;* and knowing—what can we do but strive to make our lives like His own? . . . Let us consider the tender charity with which Jesus announced to His chosen Disciples the approach of His cruel Death. For Himself He reserved all the pain of anticipation, while He promptly sought to re-assure, to sustain, to fortify them. He passes over the mention of the scenes of unparalleled cruelty and of anguish,

which the morrow was to witness; and leads their minds to dwell on the thought of His Resurrection : *But I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. Because I live, and you shall live.* Jesus would have us rejoice, because we live in His Resurrection-Life; and that this thought should sustain us in all our present tribulations, and amid the trials of our death-hour. And who, or what is able to take from us this joy ? Jesus is actually with us now, though unseen : His Eucharistic Presence is the pledge of His Glorious Presence, which will entrance us with delight throughout Eternity.

COLLOQUY.

How can I adequately express, O my Jesus, the joy, the gratitude, the love my soul experiences, as Thou reminst me to-day of the inestimable benefits which unfold themselves beneath the divine influence of Thy word of promise to Thy children : *I will not leave you orphans.* In Thy great charity Thou hast devised a plan whereby the pain of separation from Thee is lessened, and the hope of seeing Thee as Thou art, is assured to me by the sacramental union of my life with Thine own Resurrection-Life. Give me grace yet more faithfully to correspond with the favours granted me; and to draw more closely around me the bonds of a stronger affection for Thyself, the eternal Joy of my heart.

RESOLUTION.

To testify my gratitude towards Jesus, by doing all my actions in such a manner as to cement my union with Him more firmly.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

I will not leave you orphans: Your joy no man taketh from you.

PRAYER.

O Jesus! living in Mary.

Twenty-first Week after Pentecost.—Friday.

Love and obedience cannot be separated.

JESUS said: He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me. And he that loveth Me shall be loved by My Father; and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.—S. JOHN XIV.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves Saint John as he listened to the words spoken by his Dear Master after the Last Supper, and which he afterwards recorded in his gospel.

II. PRELUDE.

O God, make us love Thee with so vigorous a love, that it may cause us to observe Thy commandments undeviatingly.

I. POINT.

True love is proved by our works.

It is not in words, nor in feelings, but in deeds that true love consists. It is this maxim which our Adorable Master teaches us when He says : *He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me.* When divine love dwells in the heart, it is necessarily active : where such activity ceases to shew itself, we may be certain that love has ceased to exist. The outcome of love is activity. This we see exemplified in a wonderfully striking manner in Jesus : *He loved us*, and therefore He could not spare Himself when our interests were at stake. And if we, on our part, really love Him, is there anything we can refuse, when it is a question of pleasing and serving Him ? No, the love of God is the fulfilling of the law. To know and practise the commandments of Jesus Christ is the extension of the precept of divine charity. In this should all our piety consist ; towards this end should all our practices of devotion be directed. In order that the commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ should be constantly the object of our practical attention, let us often meditate upon them : never may we violate them, never fail to obey them at all times—in all places—in little matters as in great. Love for God makes all things easy. We often wonder at the labours the Saints have undertaken, and continued up to the very end of their lives : but as a matter of fact, we only witness in them the simple effect of the love of God. How far are we influenced by it ? *He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me.*

II. POINT.

The special favours with which God recompenses whatever is done for His love's sake.

What reward could surpass that which is promised in these words of the Son of God : *He that loveth Me shall be loved by My Father ; and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him : We will come to him, and make Our abode with him.* To be loved by Jesus—by the Adorable Trinity —by the God Who is the perfection of charity ! what more can be desired ? To be the friend of the Sovereign Lord of Heaven and earth—the Almighty One—the Supreme Arbiter of life and death—in time and eternity, what happiness, what honour can be compared to this ? In the world what is not done to please, under certain circumstances, certain persons ? And how often do not the efforts to do so prove after all useless—being repaid perhaps only by disdain ? To gain an earthly advantage what vast sacrifices are made ! How foolish we are if not ready to make better sacrifices than those of mere worldlings ! What difficulty can trouble us or cast us down, while God is looking upon our every effort with complacency, and observing each action with Fatherly affection ? What anticipated fears, or actual combats can shake our courage and confidence ? for will not Jesus make known to us the mysteries of His love, the secrets of His grace in accordance with His promise : *I will manifest Myself to him that keepeth My commandments.* And since these ineffably divine communications can but increase the ardour of love for God in the soul, and multiply the good works it necessarily produces, so also through them, are more abundant favours bestowed by Him. God takes entire possession of the soul, delights to dwell in it, to crown it with His benedictions.

COLLOQUY.

O my soul, canst thou comprehend the immense advan-

tages of divine love? Jesus offers it to thee, that thou mayst share in them. Thou couldst not, O Jesus, promise anything more precious than the love of the Blessed Trinity as my recompense, if I, *having Thy commandments, keep them!* How is it that my indifference and ingratitude have not wholly disappeared? Why are my transgressions of Thy law of love still so numerous, so oft repeated? Direct my thoughts and affections, O Jesus, towards Thyself, so that I may henceforth prove my love by my obedience, and my obedience by my love.

RESOLUTION.

To act in the spirit of divine love—in entire conformity to the commands of God.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

If you love Me, keep my commandments.

PRAYER.

O Jesus! living in Mary.

Twenty-first Week after Pentecost.—Saturday.

The Gift of Peace.

Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth do I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid.—S. JOHN xiv.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us in spirit, draw near to Jesus in the Coenaculum, and kneeling at His Feet, receive from Him that divine gift of peace which He bestowed on His Disciples.

II. PRELUDE.

Adorable Lord, give us Thy peace; and may we preserve it in our hearts and minds by the constant practice of recollection.

I. POINT.

The peace of God cannot remain in hearts that are disturbed by the troubles and cares of this world, or that enjoy its false peace.

The peace afforded by the world consists in the exterior enjoyment of earthly advantages—but it is not continuous, it is not real, its appearance is deceitful. Often this outward calm causes its possessor to be envied, or honoured; and all the while true peace is a stranger to his heart, which is perhaps agitated by passion, anxiety, or remorse of conscience. The world still deludes its votaries, saying: *Peace, peace, and there is no peace.* It lulls them to sleep; and in how many cases does not this sleep prove fatal? But Jesus says: *My peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth.* That which He offers us is the effect of a clear understanding between the servant and the Master. If we do His Will, peace with God is established in the heart; peace also with our neighbour—whom we love and assist for God's sake; peace with ourselves—through the exercise of perpetual mortification. This threefold peace fills the soul, and

satisfies the heart ; it is so durable, that even death cannot destroy it ; it is in fact a foretaste of the perfect peace of Heaven. This peace assures to faithful souls a sweet repose in the midst even of the greatest trials and afflictions ; but in order to preserve this inestimable gift we must not forget the advice which accompanies it : *My peace I give unto you : let not your heart be troubled*—having received My peace, do not permit disquietude, and the sad effects of faithlessness to deprive you of it. One should beware of allowing sensible objects to occupy the soul, by making too vivid an impression upon it : unwatchfulness in this particular, results in trouble and fear during the period of adversity—and immoderate joy in the hour of prosperity. The recollection of the Presence of God becomes excluded from the mind ; and if recalled, it is at the cost of painful effort. And yet another evil consequence marks the absence of peace,—relish for piety and the practices of a holy life are wanting. Well may we beg of Jesus to renew in our favour to-day His blessing of peace.

II. POINT.

Such as are recollected, possess uninterrupted peace.

One single look towards God unites a soul (possessed by the spirit of peace) to Him. Each thought directed to Jesus is a renewal of quiet joy. The world, as we have seen, cannot give peace ; its very wishes with regard to it are vain and sterile. But when Jesus expresses His desire that we may enjoy true peace, it is because He *can* bestow it ; and the power of His words takes effect in us. He alone has the right to say : *Let not your heart be troubled*, for He alone, by His grace, can assure us against all that

may excite our fears. Most true is it that : *much peace they have who love Thy law, O God,* who prefer the doing of it, the fulfilling of Thy holy Will, to all things else. They repose their happiness in Thee—they exist in Thee—they find Thee everywhere—they are at home in Thy Presence. Do we know and appreciate the peace of such as have acquired thoroughly the practice of interior recollection ? Are we living under the covenant of God's peace ? If we have cause to bewail any departure from the path of His commandments, do we promptly *return and be quiet, that we may be saved ?* *feeling that in silence and in hope shall our strength be.* Banishing all troublous thoughts, overcoming all anxious fears, may we live at peace with all men, notwithstanding every obstacle ; at peace with self by means of the practice of mortification : at peace with God through Him Who is the Prince of Peace.

COLLOQUY.

O my Saviour, Who didst come to bring peace on earth, and didst leave it as a most precious legacy to Thy disciples, endow my soul with this blessed gift. May I gladly resign all worldly contentment, so that I may possess unalloyed that joy which springs from perfect peace, and which is unknown save to such as love and serve Thee alone. Keep far from me the sad consequences of trouble and disquietude, so that after having safely traversed the tempest-tossed ocean of this life, I may at length behold the calm beauty of the crystal sea, on which no storms arise.

RESOLUTION.

To thank Jesus often for His blessings of peace.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

My peace I give unto you : let not your heart be troubled.

PRAYER.

Take, O Lord, and receive.

Twenty-second Week after Pentecost.—Sunday.

On the obligation to pay tribute.

Then the Pharisees consulted among themselves how to ensnare Him in His speech. And they sent to Him their disciples with the Herodians, saying : Master, we know that Thou art a true speaker, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest Thou for any man : for Thou dost not regard the person of men. Tell us therefore what dost Thou think, is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not ? He saith to them : Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's : and to God, the things that are God's.—S. MATT. xxii.

I. PRELUDE.

We see Jesus teaching in the Temple, and the Pharisees listening to see if they might not perchance *ensnare Him in His speech.*

II. PRELUDE.

Replenish us, O Lord, with the spirit of prudence, that we may escape the snares of Satan and of the world.

I. POINT.

The Pharisees seek to entrap Jesus by asking Him a subtle question.

The Pharisees consulted amongst themselves how to ensnare Jesus in His speech. This perverse and deceitful sect, filled with despairing envy as they witnessed the success of the preaching of our Lord, were bent on finding an occasion whereby He, Who came to save mankind, might be found worthy of death. They believed the moment had now arrived for the accomplishment of their wicked design. They therefore sent a deputation, chosen from amongst themselves, together with some Herodians, to ask Jesus openly if it were lawful for the Jews to pay tribute to a foreign ruler. In their malice they sank their own differences of opinion on this point; and acted for once in union, to compass their end. They could not doubt but that Jesus would by His answer, necessarily provoke the indignation of either one party or the other. If He declared that the tax ought to be paid, He would arouse the anger of the Jews, who hated the Roman power, and considered this sign of dependence as an insult and injury to their national rights and privileges. If, on the contrary, Jesus pronounced the payment to be unjust, He would arouse against Himself the existing secular authority, and the partisans of Herod would not fail to accuse Him and His followers to their master, of rebellion and treachery against the emperor. As we consider the craft of the enemies of God, we learn how requisite it is for us to obtain from Him the spirit of prudence, that we may know how to meet and repel the advances of those who seek our ruin. Satan takes care to unite his forces in such a manner as to make our fall, as he hopes, inevitable:

he uses stratagem with consummate skill; but our unvarying plan of defence must be to uphold the honour of God, to trust in Him for guidance as to how we should act—*He will make also with temptation, issue; that we may be able to bear it*, and to escape the snares of Satan. In the midst of the holiest occupations, let us not suppose that we may not become the victims of his wiles.

II. POINT.

The wisdom which marks Jesus' answer, concerning the tribute-money.

The question to which it was expected Jesus would give an answer that could not fail to bring ruin upon Himself, was a master-piece of the devil's skill. His ambassadors said: *Master, we know that Thou art a true speaker, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest Thou for any man: for Thou dost not regard the person of men. Tell us therefore, what dost Thou think: is it lawful to pay tribute to Cæsar, or not?* If we examine the manner adopted by Satan to ensnare us, we shall find that he always begins to seduce us by flattering our self-love, and trying to inspire us with an overweening esteem for ourselves. It is only through humility that we can defeat his purpose—for humility is the mother of prudence. Distrust of any human resource and dependence on God's help, at such a moment is our only security. Oh, that we valued the acquirement of true humility far more than we do! . . . Jesus detected the wicked intention which prompted the question of the Pharisees and Herodians, and replied as we should do when evil suggestions of pride, of ambition, of self-approval, come to us under the guise of high regard for our opinion, de-

ference paid to our judgment : *Why do you tempt me, ye hypocrites?* The example of our Lord on this occasion, teaches us to reject with disfavour (at least interiorly felt) all praise whether merited or not, wherewith the devil often gains his point of awakening vain-glory and self-complacency.

. . . . We should deal under any such circumstances with simple straightforwardness. *Show me*, said Jesus, *the coin of the tribute*; and when they told Him that the image and inscription upon it was the emperor's, He added : *Render therefore to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's : and to God, the things that are God's.* He upheld the legitimate authority of the emperor by shewing that one who had the power to cause coins to be in use amongst the people, bearing his image as their ruler, had a right to demand payment of their tribute : nevertheless He reminded them of the higher gradation of duty they owed to God, and that they were under unquestionable obligations to give Him His due. The messengers of Satan withdrew, defeated by the wisdom and prudence of Him, Whom it had been their mission to destroy. If we imitate Jesus, and keep God's honour chiefly in view, our enemies too will *leave us and go their way.*

COLLOQUY.

Thou dost teach me, O Wisdom of the Father, that if I would escape the artifices of the devil, when he craftily makes use of certain questionings and suggestions in order to ensnare me, I must learn quickly to detect his hypocrisy ; and hold firmly to those principles of faith which point out the necessity of treating it with the contempt it deserves, while I look to God for help to act with prudence and decision. Give me, O Lord, a simple heart, and a right spirit; fill me with true wisdom, so that while I yield honour

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to all to whom it is due, I may have the greater glory of God continually in view.

RESOLUTION.

To acquire more humility—the safeguard against every suggestion of pride and vain-glory.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Why do you tempt me? Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's: and to God, the things that are God's.

PRAYER.

O God, Who didst teach.

Twenty-second Week after Pentecost.—Monday.

The Just must needs suffer.

I am the True Vine, and My Father is the Husbandman: Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit, He will take away: and every one that beareth fruit, He will purge it, that it may bring forth more fruit.—S. JOHN xv.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us listen to our Divine Lord speaking in the Cœnaculum, and declaring Himself to be the True Vine, and that His Heavenly Father will prune the branches in Him, that bear fruit.

II. PRELUDE.

Give us strength, O Lord, willingly to endure any suffering
Thy divine wisdom may deem necessary for our sanctification.

I. POINT.

The sufferings of the just are a token of the love God has for them.

It is by the trials and sorrows of this life that God is pleased to perfect His elect. He, like a skilful husbandman, neglects not to cut away all that is defective or redundant in the living branches of the Mystic Vine, with the pruning-knife of His wise care: severe though the process may be, He thereby renders them more fruitful, and more beautiful in His own Eyes. Thus crosses, persecutions, the loss of earthly goods, of reputation, every kind of temporary affliction, or interior trial, privation of sensible consolation, and of the sweetness of devotion, are amongst the various measures of which the Heavenly Father makes use, in order to purify our hearts, to detach us from creatures, and to cause us to produce better and more abundant fruit. In all such trying occasions let us take care to call the spirit of faith to our aid, acknowledging that God *can* only act for our ultimate good, and abandoning ourselves entirely to His Providence. Remove, O Lord, by any means thou deemest best, all that may prove a hindrance to our perfection; and prevent our bringing forth the fruit Thou dost expect us to bear, as branches of the True Vine. Make us to esteem sufferings as a mark of predestination, and pledges of Thy love. May we recollect that the branches which Thou dost not prune will wither, and that Thou wilt wholly take them

away, and destroy them ; but if we abide in the Vine, and undergo the pain to which Thou, the Divine Husbandman, mayst see fit to subject us, we shall resemble Him more closely, in Whom we live.

II. POINT.

The sufferings of the just serve to enrich them with merits, and to make them advance in perfection.

The great advantage to be derived from the trials and tribulations of this life, when endured in a spirit of faith, is the abundance of grace and of merits that accrue therefrom. In effect, it is in affliction—in grief, that solid virtues are formed and perfected : the soul, if tarnished, is cleansed—if pure, is yet more purified. It is in the hour of adversity that union with Jesus and conformity to Him are acquired, and that we are rendered more worthy objects of His divine complacency. How then does it so often happen that we do not willingly accept, still less desire those transitory sufferings, which bring about such happy results ? Do not the real advantages attached to tribulation infinitely surpass their apparent disadvantages ? Well may we implore the Holy Spirit to enlighten our understanding, to strengthen our will, to augment our love, so that we may kiss the Hand that lays each fresh cross upon us, and bless God for His goodness in our behalf. *What son is there, whom the father doth not correct ? All chastisement for the present indeed seemeth not to bring joy, but sorrow ; but afterwards it will yield, to them who are exercised by it, the most peaceable fruits of justice.*

COLLOQUY.

Thou, O Jesus, art the Source of life to all Thine elect !

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May I evermore abide in Thee, and do Thou abide in me ; so that I may bear much fruit to the honour and praise of the Heavenly Father. I love to feel my dependence on Thee, and to acknowledge that without Thee I am nothing, and can do nothing. But united inseparably to Thee, shall I not participate in Thy virtue and strength, and become capable of bearing a resemblance to Thee ? Make me ready to suffer aught that may conduce to so desirable an end. Do with me what Thou wilt, O God ; only make me worthy to remain as a living branch in the True Vine.

RESOLUTION.

To receive with submission and holy joy all the afflictions with which God may be pleased to visit me.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

In this is My Father glorified, that you bring forth very much fruit, and become My disciples.

PRAYER.

Take, O Lord, and receive.

Twenty-second Week after Pentecost.—Tuesday.

Withered branches of the Vine are cast away.

I am the Vine, you are the branches : He that abideth in Me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit : If any one abide not in Me, he shall be cast forth as a branch, and shall wither, and they shall gather him up, and cast him into the fire and he burneth.—S. JOHN xv.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us go in spirit again to the Upper-Room ; and there continue to meditate in the Presence of Jesus, on the similitude of the Vine and its branches.

II. PRELUDE.

Adorable Jesus, Thou art the only Source of life to our souls : unite Thyself to us, and never permit that we should be separated from Thee.

I. POINT.

It is by being united to Jesus that we are pleasing to His Heavenly Father.

This verity is founded on the words of our Lord : *Without Me you can do nothing.* It is in Jesus and by Jesus alone, that we are worthy of the regard, and of the complacency of the Father : our works being of no value in His sight, if He sees them not in Jesus, His Well-Beloved Son. What can He find in us, apart from Jesus, that is pure and holy, and fitted to evoke His love ? Nothing, absolutely nothing. But if our deeds with their merits, be united to the deeds and merits of our Redeemer, then their worth becomes inestimable ; even the least, the most unimportant are reckoned by God and the holy Angels as priceless. Oh, how strenuously should we endeavour to acquire a closer union with our Lord ! to be more fruitful branches of the True Vine ! to be one with Him, as He is with the Father. Divine grace, like the vital sap which circulates in the tree, enters into the separate being of each true adherent of Jesus,—is their nourishment, the cause of

their growth, their fruitfulness. If we are carefully following His counsel : *Abide in me*, then, O happy necessity, He is abiding in us, and we are in a position to obtain our highest demands—an increase in every virtue ; for He adds : *If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you shall ask whatever you will and it shall be done unto you.* Shall we not avail ourselves of such advantageous conditions ?

II. POINT.

Such as are not united to Jesus deserve to be rejected by the Father.

If any one abide not in Me, he shall be cast forth as a branch to be burned. Should we be so unhappy as not to bear fruit—to be dissevered from the Vine, we certainly shall not be counted worthy to occupy the place of honour and of glory reserved for us in the Paradise of God. We may not be useless members of His Son. Whatever talents we possess, whatever other powers, they will contribute nothing to our own salvation or that of our neighbour, if used apart from Jesus, Who wins, converts, and sanctifies hearts through such as are attached to Him. Withered, separated, fruitless branches *will be cast into the fire and burned.* What a terrible menace is this ! applied as it is to such as were once living branches. If we obstinately abuse the graces which have been especially lavished upon us, do we not deserve to be eternally divided from Jesus, and doomed to share in the punishment of the reprobate. Are we separating ourselves from Him, by neglecting to accomplish the duties of our vocation ? Are we (gradually perhaps) dissociating ourselves from the companionship of His holy ones ? and falling into a state of tepidity, are we beginning

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to lack both virtue and piety? If so, we are withering. *Is the burning wind* of the spirit of the world's excitement *drying up the fruit* which perhaps a rich blossom promised, but a short time ago? Perchance the words of the prophet may not be inapplicable in our case: *God found His chosen ones like grapes in the desert, but they alienated themselves.* Let us examine as to whether our spiritual life is in the full vigour of an unimpaired union with the True Vine.

COLLOQUY.

What, O God, is my condition in Thy sight? I fear, indeed, that I often run the risk of losing, through my indifference, some of those graces which Thou wouldest not withhold, were I more faithful in the use of them. Let not the withering blast of sin render me unworthy to be numbered among the living branches of the Vine; let nothing ever separate my soul from the only Source of life. Rather do Thou, Who art One with the Father and the Holy Ghost—and desirer to be one with me,—strengthen the union that subsists between myself and Thyself, so that I fail not to flourish in the courts of the house of our God, and bring forth fruit unto sanctification.

RESOLUTION.

To thank Jesus continually for having united me to Himself.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

The new and the old fruit, my Beloved, I have kept for Thee.

PRAYER.

Take, O Lord, and receive.

Twenty-second Week after Pentecost.—Wednesday.

We must abide in the Love of Jesus.

If you keep my commandments, you shall abide in My love: as I also have kept My Father's commandments, and do abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and your joy may be filled.—S. JOHN xv.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us imagine that we hear Jesus saying to each one of us: *Abide in My love.*

II. PRELUDE.

Good Master of our hearts, make our love for Thee more solid and enduring. Give us grace to *abide in Thy love* to the last moment of our lives.

I. POINT.

Means of confirming ourselves in the love of Jesus.

The Son of God again invites us to-day to remain steadfast in divine love; and assures us that the means of persevering in this, is to keep His commandments. Let us seek thoroughly to understand how sweet and excellent a privilege it is to receive from Jesus this invitation: My child! cease not to belong to Me in the closest bonds of charity; forget not the gift thou hast made Me of thy heart, with all its affections.

And now, wouldst thou not go forward towards the more perfect acquisition of that love wherewith I love My Father, and which many of My saints have had for Me? Keep then My commandments; not only such as are indubitably necessary to salvation, but those likewise which My Heart dictates to Thine: those silent counsels which forbid the least infidelity, the least dividing of thine affections between Myself and any rival: those hidden precepts which require thee to correct some particular defect which displeases Me, or to practise one of My most cherished virtues. Observe then the commandments of My love: see if thou art always docile in obeying My every wish. . . . O Divine Master, how can we refuse to attend to the faintest inspiration of Thy grace? rather will we henceforth be more on the alert lest we lose one word of command from Thee. *Speak Lord, for Thy servant heareth.*

II. POINT.

Nothing ought to be capable of separating us from the love of Jesus.

Jesus knowing, in His Divine prescience, our extreme weakness, and liability to fall, desires to forewarn us against the perils to which we must, in this world, inevitably be exposed. He would awaken our attention, and draw it to three principal dangers by His words: *Abide in My love*; as if He would say: notwithstanding your inconstancy, notwithstanding the natural inclinations of your heart, notwithstanding the force of your temptations, persevere in the fidelity you have promised Me so solemnly. *Abide in My love*: establish yourself therein permanently. . . . Listening with reverence to our Lord's recommendation, let us learn

to distrust ourselves; for however holy and fervent our present sentiments may be, they cannot of themselves ensure faithfulness to Jesus—not even until to-morrow. The heart allows itself to be seduced by self-love, deceived through creatures, vanquished in temptation, and over-powered by adversity. Can we, ought we, to place the remotest degree of confidence in ourselves? Our only hope of perseverance lies in our keeping within the safe refuge of the Saviour's love. *Who then, exclaims Saint Paul, shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation? or distress, or danger? . . . I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor might, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

COLLOQUY.

O Jesus, how greatly I need to be confirmed in Thy love! when shall I place my heart with Thine own, never to withdraw it again? Thou hast told me to *abide in Thy love*; and Thou dost give me this counsel of purest charity, in order that *Thy joy may be in me, and that my joy may be filled*. Let me learn better how to hearken to Thy every command—how to please Thee at all times—how to love Thee unceasingly. Be Thou, O Jesus, the Centre around which may revolve all my thoughts and desires; and when the last hour of my life on earth shall arrive, may I make an act of love, which shall be uninterrupted, while it intensifies itself throughout eternity.

RESOLUTION.

To be attentive in listening to the Voice of Divine love, speaking to my heart.

THE TWENTY-SECOND WEEK AFTER PENTECOST.—THURSDAY.

Lesson for the Day.

H- ~~He~~ *is a student in charity, a child in God, and God in him.*

PRAYER.

O Jesus, living in Mary.

Twenty-second week after Pentecost.—Thursday.

The friends of Jesus.

This is My commandment that you love one another, as I have loved you: Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends: you are My friends, if you do the things that I command you.—S. JOHN XV.

I. PRELUDE.

Jesus having yet more to say to us on the subject of divine charity, let us again listen to His words, and treasure them in our hearts.

II. PRELUDE.

Give us grace, O Jesus, so to understand the requirements and effects of Thy law of love, that we may practise it in all its perfection.

I. POINT.

What ought to be the extent of our charity towards our neighbour.

Love one another, as I have loved you. We do well to ask the question : How has Jesus loved us? after what manner? Consecrating each moment of His mortal Life to the important work of our redemption, He has preceded us, in the way of perfect Christian virtue, in order to facilitate the practice of it by His own example. We have seen Him during the course of His Ministry, instructing, consoling, assisting, healing, praying for, those who came to Him : we have beheld how in His Passion He suffered the most cruel torment, the deepest humiliation, and ended His Life at length by the shameful death of the Cross. Thus it is that Jesus has loved us! to such an extent as to die for His friends; yes! and for His enemies also. And so great an effect has His love had on many of His followers—the Apostles—the Martyrs—that they have literally fulfilled His precept *to love one another, as He has loved us*; and have laid down their lives, that the deposit of the faith committed to them might be preserved and transmitted to others. In our own day are there not also many imitators of Jesus Christ, who sacrifice their goods, their repose, their health, their life, out of the great love they have towards their neighbour? And this touching spectacle of charity will the Church (following the example of Her Divine Spouse) present before the world until the end of time. What part are we taking in the performance of heroic acts of charity? Or, at least, are we seizing every opportunity of self-sacrifice in favour of our neighbour? *Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*

II. POINT.

The esteem we ought to have of mutual charity.

You are My friends, if you do the things that I command you. Having given us His law of mutual love, could our Lord have made use of a more persuasive motive to ensure our ready obedience than this? What is more capable of touching our hearts, than this promise of His friendship? If charity reign amongst you, if you bear with one another, if you assist one another in spiritual and temporal necessities, then *you are My friends*. How dear must this virtue be to the Heart of Jesus! how precious in His Eyes! What are we actually doing to merit the accomplishment in our regard of the promise of the Unchangeable—the Eternal Friend? And having attained this dignity, how careful should we be to prove ourselves yet more worthy of it! As friends of Jesus, therefore let us regulate our judgment of others—our feelings, our desires, our words, our actions, in their regard. All, on this point, is of grave importance. Happy are we if our hearts are full of charity; if we are ceaselessly watchful lest it be injured in the slightest degree by ourselves; if we are endeavouring each day of our lives to augment charity in the world, by our kindly offices and gentle words; if we are conferring constantly with our Friend as to the assistance we may best render others—the sacrifices we should make for them.

COLLOQUY.

O Jesus, my One True Friend! while Thine enemies are banded together to do the work of ruinous hate, may I, by Thy grace, be enabled to take my part with those who are united with Thee, to do the work of saving charity. Make

me more vigilant with regard to my motives in my dealings with others, and fill me with Thine own spirit of universal, self-sacrificing love. Let me prove my friendship with Thee, O Jesus, by doing at all times the things Thou hast commanded me : by being ready (if need be) *to lay down my life for the brethren.*

RESOLUTION.

To put away all sentiments opposed to true charity.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

In this we have known the charity of God, because He hath laid down His life for us.

PRAYER.

Soul of Christ.

Twenty-second Week after Pentecost.—Friday.

Why Jesus has chosen us to be His friends.

You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you ; and have appointed you, that you should bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain.—S. JOHN xv.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us imagine we hear Jesus saying to us as He said to His Apostles : *I have chosen you.*

II. PRELUDE.

Give us grace, O Lord, to become more worthy of the choice Thou hast made of us ; and may we carry out Thy intention that *we should bring forth fruit which may remain.*

I. POINT.

Jesus' confidence in us.

Let us admire the goodness of our Divine Saviour, as demonstrated in His farewell interview with His Apostles, in whose hearts He seeks to engrave more and more deeply the assurance of His love and friendship. *I will not call you servants, He says : for the servant knoweth not what his lord doth : but I have called you friends, because all things whatsoever I have heard of My Father, I have made known to you.* The revelation made by the Son of God to the Church is like a dawning of bright day-light, wherein are manifested the purposes of God—His designs for time and eternity, relative to the wicked and the good. The mysteries of the eternal Existence of the Father, together with that of Himself and of the Holy Spirit, are opened up before the eye of faith. Having been amongst men, He has chosen to disclose to them (and to some in an especial manner), the secrets of His divine and most loving intentions on our behalf. Jesus has confidence in us, and therefore it is that *whatsoever He has heard of the Father, He has told unto us.* And why? That we may meditate upon all He has made known to us, with an ardent longing to discover His entire will concerning ourselves. If Jesus deign to instruct us in things *which appertain to life and godliness,* with what earnestness ought we not to devote our whole

being to the carrying out of His designs, to the acquitting ourselves more faithfully of the high and sacred duties of a friendship which is divine. Jesus has confided his wishes to us. Shall we betray the trust reposed in us, and slight its obligations ?

II. POINT.

For what purpose has Jesus chosen us.

You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and appointed you, that you should bring forth fruit, and your fruit should remain. And not only this, but that whatsoever you shall ask of the Father in My Name, He may give it you. Jesus Christ elected the Apostles to be the foundation-stones of His Church : they fulfilled their mission with strict fidelity, and we know that whatever they asked of God in the Name of Jesus they obtained ; even power to perform astonishing miracles, and to stand firm in the hour of martyrdom. After them, and down to the present time, the choice made by Jesus has been perpetually renewed, so that their work being continued, *their fruit remains*. And on us this grace of predilection has been conferred, and to us Jesus repeats : *I have appointed you. . . . that your fruit also should remain. . . . and that whatsoever you shall ask of the Father in My Name, he may give it you.* It is for this reason, and for this purpose that we have been chosen. Certainly we could not boast of having, of ourselves, done anything for God, could we ? Were there any merits on our part, which first attracted the notice of Jesus ? were we beforehand with Him, in asking for His gracious favours ? *He hath first loved us.* Our love, our gratitude, and our humility, should combine to offer Him thanks for numbering us amongst His elect ; while our constant prayer should be that *when our*

work shall be manifest, in the day of the Lord which shall declare it, we may receive the reward—that our fruit may remain in eternity.

COLLOQUY.

O Lord Jesus, I adore Thee with sovereign respect and thankfulness because Thou hast made choice of me, and appointed me to work together with Thy Saints in the accomplishing of the purposes of God. But where are the fruits of my labours? Where is the increase of virtues and their attendant merits? Have I not appeared according to my own views, to have done much, while Thou hast perhaps adjudged me worthy of only a very small reward? Help me to make amends for my past unfaithfulness, and never again to slight Thy love, lest *Thou shouldst be ashamed of me*, whom Thou hast called Thy friend, *when Thou comest in the glory of Thy Father, with the holy Angels.*

RESOLUTION.

To consider more closely the results of my having been chosen by Jesus, to work and pray in His Name.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

I have chosen you, and appointed you.

PRAYER

Take O Lord, and receive.

Twenty-second Week after Pentecost.—Saturday.

On the abuse of God's grace.

If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin: but now they have no excuse for their sin; He that hateth Me, hateth My Father also.—S. JOHN xv.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us return to the Upper-Room, and hear our Divine Lord saying, that they who sin are inexcusable.

II. PRELUDE.

O Jesus, keep us from ever abusing Thy graces, with which Thou dost deign to visit our soul; but may we correspond thereto more faithfully.

I. POINT.

We are inexcusable, if we abuse God's graces.

Human passion and vice, which exercise such great power in the world, completely blind those who yield themselves to their sway. They do not know God: they are unacquainted with their Saviour. But professing Christians, such as have been instructed in our pure and holy religion, what excuse can they have if, believing in the Divinity of Christianity, in the authority of Holy Church, and the mission of Her Priests, they do not conform their lives to their belief? To them who observe not the commandments of Jesus

Christ—who refuse to obey the dictates of conscience, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, these words are addressed: *They have no excuse for their sin.* It is the abuse of any grace which renders a member of the Church so guilty; causing such a one to afflict most cruelly the merciful Heart of Jesus, and to incur the danger of a rigorous judgment on the part of God. But what shall be said and feared concerning those who have been called to the Religious Life, whose souls have been the object of God's tenderest charity, when they (far from responding to the advances of His love by the increasing holiness of their lives) languish in the midst of serious defects, and allow their spiritual existence to stagnate through indifference and tepidity. Are we thus offending the goodness of God? Have we not many times, perhaps, by our resistance deprived ourselves of some of His best gifts? *Yet the Lord waiteth, that He may have mercy upon us.* At this moment is He not speaking to our hearts, and entreating us to make reparation while yet there is time, for our past ingratitude? O Mary, our Mother, help us to obtain strength and perseverance, to carry out our present resolve of imitating thee in thy fidelity to special graces.

II. POINT.

We should make reparation not only for our own sins, but for the sins by which others continue to outrage their Saviour's love.

He that hateth Me, hateth My Father also. We may well shudder when the sanctity of God is despised, when His laws and His justice are defied. We can but sigh and weep when we see the impious full of hatred towards Jesus, their Saviour; blaspheming His Holy Name, denying His Divinity, withdrawing souls from His service. But if our zeal be

true, our feelings will not be limited to those of sterile compassion : we shall be forced to offer to our Good God the compensation of penance and prayer, and that to the utmost of our ability. We shall be most thankful if permitted to suffer with Jesus in expiation of the sins we daily witness. Let us imitate (if in our power) the holy examples afforded by so many fervent Christians—so many holy Religious, who have rejoiced to be the victims of the world's hatred, and of the spirit of persecution. Their Dear Master preserves them, in the midst of their enemies' fury, to pray and plead for the souls of men ; to edify by their patience, to convert sinners by their example, and with true devotedness to act as their pioneers on the path to Heaven. A great esteem doubtless, we have for those who by a life of self-sacrifice daily strive to repair the injuries done to Jesus, their Lord : but better is it also to throw ourselves, heart and soul, into this sublime work of reparation—making His interests completely our own—His glory the dearest object of our lives.

COLLOQUY.

My God, should I not be culpable indeed if I were ever, by an abuse of Thy grace, to take part with Thine enemies ? Oh, preserve me always from such an evil. Replenish me rather with holy zeal, which shall make me undertake with greater ardour to lessen their forces. I know that I have sometimes turned a deaf ear to Thy Voice of inspiration ; that I should not be so poor in virtue and in merit if I had never resisted Thy grace. Accept, nevertheless, my resolution to console Thy Sacred Heart, O Jesus, by my fidelity to Its loving desires ; and by my willingness to suffer in expiation of the numberless sins by which Thy goodness is outraged. Possess me entirely, O Holy Spirit of God.

RESOLUTION.

Faithfully to follow all inspirations of grace.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

They have no excuse for their sin.

PRAYER.

Soul of Christ.

Twenty-third Week after Pentecost.—Sunday.

Faith and confidence in Jesus.

A certain ruler came, and adored JESUS, saying : Lord, my daughter is even now dead, but come and lay Thy Hand upon her, and she shall live. . . . A woman came behind JESUS and touched the hem of His garment : she said within herself : If I shall touch only His garment, I shall be healed.—S. MATT. IX.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves Jesus Christ, on His way to raise the daughter of Jairus to life, permitting a woman to draw near and touch His garment, by which she was instantly cured of her disease.

II. PRELUDE.

O Saviour, full of goodness ! Thou who deignest to be honoured by the confidence we repose in Thee, and art ever ready to attend to our desires, have mercy on us in all our trials and afflictions, whether of body or soul.

L POINT.

The goodness of the Saviour, and His readiness to attend to our requests : His spirit of self-sacrifice.

If we wish to call up before our minds a scene in our Lord's Life in which His abounding goodness, His super-human power, His divine omniscience are most strikingly manifested, such a one is portrayed for us in the Gospel of to-day. We see God walking amongst men, ministering to their necessities, conversing with them, accepting their homage as a proof of their faith, according to them the favours they ask. We see Jesus, the Eternal Son of the Father, on this earth ; going here and there on His Mission of doing good, setting us an example of practical humility, patient charity, and perpetual self-sacrifice. How lovely does each virtue become in our eyes, when we contemplate first one and then another in the God-Man ! We perceive what power His gentle dignity had over the hearts of men, as on this occasion, when the ruler of the synagogue by his prayer of confidence, and the sick woman by her act of faith, acknowledged this Divine influence. So if we imitated the conduct and demeanour of Jesus, we should continue His Mission upon earth, and draw souls to Him, eliciting belief in His power and goodness. Is the life of Jesus being truly reproduced in us ? If we went about doing

good in His stead, if we were always bearing about in our bodies the mortification of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be manifested in our bodies we should be more successful in our work as God's co-adjutors. Oftener (through our instrumentality) would the Angels have cause to rejoice in recording the gracious words of Jesus—to one soul : *She is not dead, but sleepeth ; I say to thee, arise.* To another : *Thy faith hath made thee whole ; go in peace.*

II. POINT.

The patience of Jesus.

How prone we are, when importuned, to lose patience. This was never the case with Jesus, for He was the very Personification of humility. He placed Himself, so to speak, at the disposal of His creatures. He, the Divine Master, became their servant. Can we then find it difficult to serve in lowly wise, all who seek or need our help ? And is not impatience very out-of-place in a servant ? As we follow in the train of Jesus to-day, and observe His gracious bearing towards all, we learn other lessons. We should be invariably affable to those with whom we come in contact, avoiding a manner that is overbearing or discourteous ; and interiorly compassionating their defects, be careful not to repulse them on account of these ; but rather to treat them with all the more tenderness, should their imperfections be to us a special source of annoyance. We should learn to despise our own sensitiveness, and to suffer through others, with patience ; remembering that we also are most assuredly a cause of vexation in some way to them. If we loved our fellow-creatures in and for Jesus alone, and not from any motive of self-interest, if we

crushed out of our hearts natural prejudices, and unfounded antipathies, how much more happy should we ourselves be, —how much more happiness should we diffuse around us !

COLLOQUY.

O Jesus ! Thy benignity towards all men fills me with loving admiration, and a desire to follow Thy perfect example in this respect. Having myself so many observable defects, I am yet often impatient with regard to those of others. Wanting in urbanity, as I frequently am, I nevertheless resent any courtesy towards myself. I fail to attract others to believe in Thy power and goodness, because I am so uncharitable a disciple of Him Who is our Master in the school of divine Love. I do discredit to my Teacher, by my ungoverned susceptibility, my want of forbearance. Give me grace, O Lord I beseech Thee, to practise the fresh lessons I have learned from Thee to-day.

RESOLUTION.

To be helpful, and affable to others under all circumstances.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Love one another with the charity of brotherhood.

PRAYER.

Our Father, and Hail Mary.

Twenty-third Week after Pentecost.—Monday.

Jesus promises to send the Paraclete.

Now I go to Him that sent Me : because I have spoken these things, sorrow hath filled your heart : But I tell you the truth : it is expedient to you that I go, for if I go not, the Paraclete will not come to you ; but if I go I will send Him to you.—S. JOHN XVI.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us hear our Lord telling His Disciples that if He went not back to His Father, the Holy Ghost would not come to them.

II. POINT.

O God ! make us better to understand the value of afflictions, and to receive with thankfulness all Thou mayest be pleased to send us.

II. PRELUDE.

It was a spiritual advantage to the Apostles to be deprived of the visible Presence of Jesus.

Such a proposition would doubtless at first appear to the constant companions of Jesus to be incredible. Therefore Jesus says with peculiar emphasis: *I tell you the truth : it is expedient to you that I go.* Human reason asks : of what possible use to the Disciples could this separation from their Master be ? And our unsubdued will puts the same ques-

tion—of what use is it—when Jesus deprives us for a while of His sensible consolations, or sends some cross we find it especially difficult to bear. As in the Apostles' case, the refining influence of suffering prepares us to receive more worthily the higher gifts of grace. The Presence of their Lord had been a constant source to them of joy and sweetness ; a joy and sweetness we have often shared when He has made His nearness known to our hearts. But He well knew that *it was expedient to them* that He should now leave them ; to the end that their virtue should be strengthened, their faith and trust energised. Their fidelity during the absence of their Master had to be put to the test. Their hope in His promises would be called into action ; their common grief would draw them more closely together in the bonds of charity. How wonderful are God's dealings with His children ! With regard to some spiritual as well as some temporal blessings, *He gives and He takes away : as it pleaseth the Lord so is it done : Blessed be the name of the Lord.*

II. POINT.

It is for our greater good, that we are visited sometimes with desolation and aridity.

Nothing is more painful to such as *have tasted and seen that the Lord is sweet*, than to be deprived of the sense of His Presence. But nothing is more beneficial to our souls' health than this trial, if we know how to profit by it. It is in moments of desolation and obscurity that we feel our extreme weakness, and fully recognise the need we have of God's assistance. Then is our faith in Him strengthened, we ardently hope for, and expect the return of His consolation, while our love is proved by a more perfect

submission to His good pleasure. We learn to practise heroic virtues—that we should serve our Dear Master not for the sake of His gifts, but simply to glorify, and honour Him. Our affection for Him becomes pure and disinterested. Holy desires go forth from the depths of our being, in search of our Well-Beloved ; and His promise is borne in upon our memory : *You shall seek Me, and you shall find Me, when you shall seek Me with all your hearts.* *I will come to you, says Jesus, and your heart shall rejoice : but did I not tell you the truth, that it was expedient to you that I should go away ?* Give us grace, O Lord, to make good use of the trial of seeming separation from Thee. An affliction it must ever be, but Thou knowest what is best for us ! If we, in the agony of desolation, cry out : *My soul is sorrowful even unto death : Remove this chalice from me ;* may we not fail to add with heart-felt submission : *but not, O God, what I will, but what Thou wilt.*

COLLOQUY.

I place myself in Thy Hands, O my God, that Thou mayest do with me what Thou wilt, being persuaded that nothing then can happen to me which will fail to be advantageous to my soul. I will accept in a spirit of submission, the trial of being apparently abandoned to myself, of aridity in prayer, of spiritual desolation, if it be Thy holy Will thus to prove my faithfulness. In the midst of my grief at Thy absence, I will not forget that Thou hast said : *For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee.* O Jesus ! let it not be very long before Thou callest me into Thine eternal Presence, to go out from it no more.

RESOLUTION.

To bear, with humility and submissive love all interior trials.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Be Thou my Helper ; forsake me not, O God, my Saviour.

PRAYER.

Take, O Lord, and receive.

Twenty-third Week after Pentecost.—Tuesday.

Sorrow changed into joy.

Amen, amen, I say to you, that you shall lament and weep, but the world shall rejoice : and you shall be made sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.—S. JOHN XVI.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us thank our Lord for having forewarned us of the sorrow which should be the lot of His chosen friends.

II. PRELUDE.

Give us a desire, O Jesus, rather to endure sorrow with Thy beloved Disciples, than enjoy the vain pleasures of the world.

I. POINT.

The just will not be free from tribulation.

However exempt from sorrow and sadness a life, entirely devoted to the immediate service of God, may appear, however impossible it may seem for grief and affliction to gain admittance within the cloister, yet certain it is that God's dearest children have to pass through painful days, and long hours of sadness. The rebellion produced within us by evil inclinations, temptations, spiritual trials—difficulties which spring up under various forms, all these combine to make us suffer. And this is permitted by God, so that we may, while on earth, resemble our Great Example, (Who suffered from the first moment of His mortal Existence until His Death), and share together with all, who like their Saviour *have come out of great tribulation*, in the joys which are unending. *You shall lament and weep*, He said to His Disciples, *but the world shall rejoice*. Tears and mourning are to be the portion of the elect, but it is of the greatest importance that we bear our sorrows in a Christian spirit. If in the midst of them, we give ourselves up to useless reflexions, which cause us to lose interior peace, if we seek to drown them in vain amusements, if we murmur against those who may have been the authors of our grief, then far from profiting by our trials, we offend God. What then is to be done? Turn to Jesus, and seek consolation from Him alone. Weep before Him, and present to Him anew the sacrifice of our whole being.

II. POINT.

Your sorrow shall be turned into joy.

Let us delight in considering how the Divine Master raises the courage of His servants, after having spoken to them of the afflictions they must expect to meet with in this life. We too may take this thought of encouragement to ourselves. *Our sorrow shall be turned into joy.* We know that the Psalmist had made this experience: *They that sow in tears shall reap in joy: going they went and wept, casting their seeds; but coming they shall come with joyfulness, carrying their sheaves:* and the Martyrs and Confessors of every age have witnessed to its truth. They found the greatest cause for thankfulness, when they were accounted *worthy to endure* for the Name of their God. They suffered much, but were happy in so doing; they wept, but their hearts were replenished with sweetest consolation. To them Jesus fulfilled His promise: *I will send the Paraclete.* Faith and confidence in the hour of trial and grief, give heroic courage. The thought that our Lord sees and knows all, is sufficient surely to sustain us beneath the heaviest cross. He is registering our every effort, bravely to bear our part of His afflictions. Are we ready to adopt—are we justified in adopting as our own, the words of Saint Paul: *I rejoice in my sufferings, and fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ for His Body, which is the Church? . . . That which is light and momentary of our tribulation, worketh for us, above measure exceedingly, an eternal weight of glory.*

COLLOQUY.

What thanks should I not render to Thee, O my God, for the assistance of Thy grace, whereby I am enabled to bear up against the trials and conflicts I encounter in Thy service? If, up to the present moment, I have too little glorified Thee by my sufferings, if I have even offended

130 TWENTY-THIRD WEEK AFTER PENTECOST.—WEDNESDAY.

Thee by my impatience and complaining, I beseech Thee to pardon me, and to give me a real desire to participate in the tribulations which Thou hast declared shall not be wanting to Thy chosen ones. Let me not forget that the sorrow of those who lament and weep now, shall be turned hereafter into joy.

RESOLUTION.

To bear all suffering with patience and thankfulness.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

PRAYER.

O Jesus, living in Mary.

Twenty-third Week after Pentecost.—Wednesday.

Prayer of Jesus after the Last Supper.

These things Jesus spoke, and lifting up His Eyes to Heaven, He said: Father, the hour is come, glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son may glorify Thee. As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He may give eternal life to all whom Thou hast given Him. Now this is eternal life: That they may know Thee, the only True God, and JESUS CHRIST, Whom Thou hast sent.—S. JOHN xvii.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves Jesus Christ in the Coenaculum : after speaking to His Apostles, He lifted up His Eyes towards Heaven, and addressed to His Father a most sublime prayer.

II. PRELUDE.

Divine Saviour, may we grow each day in the knowledge of Thy perfections, and imitate Thy virtues with increasing ardour.

I. POINT.

Jesus experienced an intense desire to communicate eternal life to all men.

Jesus had said to His Disciples at the close of His last discourse to them : *These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace : in the world you shall have distress, but have confidence, I have overcome the world.* Then lifting up His Eyes to Heaven, He said : *Father, the hour is come.* What hour Thou dost not say, O Lord : but we know it was *that* hour, the arrival of which Thou hadst so ardently desired, and which Thine enemies had often endeavoured to forestall. It was the hour for which Thou didst come into the world through love of us, and to save us from hell ; the hour which virtually concerned the eternal destiny of each. It was the hour of opprobrium, but also of power and of triumph. It was indeed to be an hour of glory to the Blessed Trinity, because the Father through it *had given power to the Son over all flesh.* Oh, how immense is the charity of God

To procure salvation for all men, none being excepted who would accept eternal life—this was His glory. There had not existed, nor would there exist a single soul, that was not dearer to Jesus than His own Life. He was about to die to redeem each one of His creatures from the dominion of Satan ; and had it been necessary, He would have suffered death as many times as there were souls to be saved. Let us draw near to our Saviour as He stands in the Upper-Room on the eve of the Passion : what heart can be so cold and insensible as not to be moved to compassion and love, as He looks up to His Father and says : *The hour is come.*

II. POINT.

It is the knowledge and love of Jesus that lead souls to eternal life.

Men are lost, because *they know not God the Father, nor Jesus Christ Whom He has sent* to be their Redeemer. They will not know nor understand, because they will not consider the exceeding greatness of Divine love. Instead of contemplating the infinite perfections of the Incarnate Word, Who united in His Person the perfect attributes of God with the virtues of a perfect Man, they deliberately ignore Him—reject His love—refuse the salvation He offers them. To such Jesus says : *You will not come to Me that you may have life.* But they who have tasted the delights of His Friendship, and have realised the happiness of serving Him—who have been taught by Him, that the attractions of the world are worthy only of contempt, do they always remain faithful to Him Who has so loved them ? Are not we ourselves too often indifferent about Him ? is

not our devotion to His service fitful or constrained? Has not the world too great a hold over our hearts, which were made only for Himself? The value of the gift of eternal life, it is true, is inestimable, but are we valuing it as highly as we ought? Jesus declared *the hour was come* for Him to secure for ever, by a mighty Sacrifice, the love of His children. The *hour is come* for us to sacrifice ourselves more entirely to Him! Father, the *hour is come* in which we resolve to repay love for love with greater constancy; in which we ask for grace to follow Jesus up to Calvary, and share in His sufferings there.

COLLOQUY.

Divine Saviour! one must indeed be astonished and grieved that so large a portion of mankind ignore Thy wonderful perfections; and the mysteries of Thy love, accomplished on behalf of all. Can it be that Thy Precious Blood has been shed in vain? that Thy sufferings fail to excite gratitude in any human heart? Alas! it is but too true. I ask myself what effect on my own life the daily meditation of Thy Life is producing. Is it leading me on to higher degrees of holiness? Have I no cause to reproach myself on this point? *Eternal life is to know Thee, O only True God.* Knowing Thee, ought it not to be my one desire to know Thee yet better? to serve Thee more faithfully? to suffer for love of Thee, My Saviour?

RESOLUTION.

Often to say, with regard to some suffering—humiliation—mortification: *Father! the hour is come:* may I glorify Thee.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

This is eternal life : to know Thee, the Only True God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent.

PRAYER.

Soul of Christ.

Twenty-third Week after Pentecost.—Thursday.

On shunning the spirit of the world.

I have manifested Thy Name to the men whom Thou hast given me out of the world. I pray for them : I pray not for the world, but for them whom Thou hast given me : because they are Thine : Holy Father, keep them in Thy name, whom Thou hast given Me : that they may be one, as We also are : They are not of the world : as I also am not of the world. I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from evil.—S. JOHN xvii.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us place ourselves near to Jesus, as He continues His prayer to His Father : He asks that we may be preserved from the dangers of the world.

II. PRELUDE.

O Lord God, may we be freed from the spirit of this world, and serve Thee with an undivided heart.

I. POINT.

We must be strangers to all that is of the world.

The world cannot understand *those things which are of the Spirit of God*: they are foolishness to it. Our Lord Himself declares this distinctly: *I have manifested Thy Name to those whom Thou hast given Me out of the world*. From it we must be separated if we would enter the school of Jesus, Who, being Goodness itself, prayed for His executioners even, and yet could not pray for it: His prayers for it would not have been availing, because it voluntarily *lies in wickedness*. *I pray not for the world*. These words should arouse us to a sense of the favour Jesus has shown us, in separating us from it. What gratitude do we not owe Him for having undeceived us concerning its illusions,—for having chosen to manifest Himself to us as to the Apostles, to reveal to us the marvellous beauty of God, and of His holy religion. We belong to God as His creatures—God has given us to His Son by our vocation to Christianity—Holy Baptism has made us His members—our religious calling has put the finishing touch to God's design of withdrawing us from the world. Should we not frequently reflect on these great benefits? and seek thoroughly to appreciate them? What temerity on our part would it be, after this grace of being separated from the influence of the world, if we feared not to retain within ourselves somewhat of its spirit! O God, inspire us with a true hatred of the world, and preserve us evermore from its seductions.

II. POINT.

Jesus prays that His Disciples should be united in charity, and protected from the corruption of the world.

Holy Father, keep them in Thy Name whom Thou hast given Me : that they may be one, as We also are. By this prayer, Jesus evinces His desire of seeing unity the most perfect, reigning amongst those who are His. He expresses a wish that His followers *should have but one heart and one soul.* *Behold how good and how pleasant it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity*—and those who profess to belong to Jesus Christ should certainly be animated by the same spirit. What an access of glory for Him, our Divine Head, where such is the case ! What a spectacle of joy to the Angels, and of edification to men ! Our hearts dilate with gladness in thinking of the world-wide union of all the faithful in this our day, with one another—as also with those who have preceded us, and those who shall succeed us up to the end of time. Oh, happy belief in the Communion of Saints, of which we daily make profession ! Although we cannot yet fully comprehend it, faith manifests to us somewhat of the infinitude of the merits and happiness of the great company of the elect, and discovers to us glimpses of its beauty. Thanks be to our Adorable Saviour for the prayer on behalf of each member of His Church, which He addressed to the Heavenly Father : *That they may be one, as We also are !* Are we doing our part towards the maintaining of brotherly charity, and to persevere holy unity amongst ourselves intact ? Could it be said of us, as of those on whom Jesus directly left the impress of His own personal charity : See how these Christians love one another ?

COLLOQUY.

O Jesus, most charitable, how can I testify my gratitude for the grace of predilection which Thou hast bestowed on me ! for having chosen to separate me from the world, and

keep me within the holy precincts of religion! For this will I bless Thee each day of my life, and will attach myself more completely to Thee; within Thy Sacred Heart I will take refuge from the spirit of the world. I will rejoice more truly in my belief in the Communion of Saints, while I strive to be more worthy to be one with them, as Thou, O my Saviour, art with the Father, and the Holy Ghost.

RESOLUTION.

To make a yet wider separation between myself and the world.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Careful to keep the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace.

PRAYER.

Our Father, and Hail Mary.

Twenty-third Week after Pentecost.—Friday.

The desire of our Lord that we may behold His glory.

I in them and Thou in Me: that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me. Father, I will that where I am, they also whom Thou hast given Me, may be with Me: that they may see My glory, which Thou hast given Me.—S. JOHN xvii.

I. PRELUDE.

We hear Jesus still praying to the Father, and for us; He desires that we may see that glory which the Father has given Him.

II. PRELUDE.

O Lord, grant that the ties of charity which bind us to Thee and to each other, may ever remain unbroken.

I. POINT.

The unity of the Church is to be a proof to all men that the Father sent the Son into this world.

The charity of the disciples of Jesus Christ should be so perfect, that the world might recognise in them the truth—that the God of all charity had Himself descended to earth, by His own example to inspire us with a practical love of this virtue. The spirit of union amongst the faithful, must be conformable to the unity, the sanctity, the charity of the Holy Trinity. It must be of a nature edifying to man, and honourable to God. Let us consider what our individual sentiments are with regard to universal charity. Are we indifferent to its claims? are we living our lives within the narrow circle of egotism—of which *self* is the centre? Can we truly say that we have formed no such circle? Do we participate in the large-heartedness of Jesus? *That the world may know, Father, that Thou hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me. . . .* Let us consider secondly, that if we, through ignorance or defect, fail in the spirit of unity, we lose an infinite number of spiritual advantages offered us by means of the Communion of Saints. The merits accruing from the sufferings, the virtues, the edifying examples of the

members of the Church, in union with the merits of Her Head, constitute (so to speak) a common fund, to which all should contribute, and from which all may derive a benefit. If our intentions, our thoughts, our desires, are concentrated on self, how many graces, consolations, lasting benefits we miss, to our own great loss. How would the world be quickly deprived of many of her votaries, if the hearts of all Christians were united in the Divine Heart of their Master ! From It one and all might obtain gentleness, and patience to bear mutual defects ; generosity in the relieving of other's afflictions ; and strength and constancy to uphold the practice of universal charity.

II. POINT.

Jesus wills that we should join Him hereafter in Heaven, and there see His glory.

Father, I will that where I am, they also whom Thou hast given Me may also be. Jesus is pleased that we should always be with Him : and can anything be more fitting, than that the members and the Head should be inseparable ? But if we would be near our Lord in His glory, where should we now seek, and remain with, Him ? Beside the manger —wherein He endured cold, privation, poverty : at Nazareth —where He for thirty years led a life of toil, ignored by the world : as He passes through the towns and villages doing good, although He is often calumniated, rudely questioned and contradicted—and often without the common necessities of life. Our search for Him should not end here. His closest friends enter with Him the garden of Gethsemani—the prison—the Pretorium : they suffer with Him, sorrow and anguish—contempt and outrage : then accompanying Him up the Hill of Calvary, are crucified together with Him.

And over the Holy Sepulchre may we not trace out the words : *If we be dead with Christ, we shall also live with Him?* The history of our Saviour's Life must, in some sort, be that of our own. The path He trod is the only sure road to glory. We have just seen where it will lead us during our sojourn here below : we remember, as we meditate, *that if we suffer, we shall also reign with Him* : and to encourage us still more do we not hear Jesus repeating on our behalf His loving desire ? *Father, I will that where I am, they also whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me : that they may see My glory.*

COLLOQUY.

Permit me, O my Beloved, to beg the favour of being everywhere and at all times with Thee. If, by reason of my frailty, I dare not ask for suffering, I beseech Thee give me love sufficient to receive with thankfulness the trials Thou art pleased to devise for my good. During my exile, let me accompany Thee: lead me where Thou Thyself hast trod; keep me by Thy side and guide my steps, until at length I pass through the portals of death, *to be with Thee where Thou art, and behold Thy glory.*

RESOLUTION.

To renounce all that might prove an obstacle to my perfect union with Jesus.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

I will that they may see My glory.

PRAYER.

Soul of Christ.

Twenty-third Week after Pentecost.—Saturday.

The last words of Jesus' Prayer in the Cenaculum.

Just Father, the world hath not known Thee: but I have known Thee: and these have known that Thou hast sent Me. And I have made known Thy Name to them, and will make it known: that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me, may be in them, and I in them.—S. JOHN xvii.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves Jesus as He utters the last words of His prayer to God: let us call them to mind with deep reverence.

II. PRELUDE.

Jesus, make known the Father to us also, in like manner as Thou hast made Him known to the Saints; so that we may love Him fervently in Thee, and serve Him under the direction of the Blessed Spirit.

I. POINT.

We may console the Divine Heart of our Lord.

Our Adorable Saviour, just on the point of consummating His work of redemption, appears to cast a glance over all that he had done, during His Lifetime, in order to enlighten and convert the world. Then He continues His affecting prayer, and this loving complaint escapes from His Sacred

Heart: *Just Father, the world hath not known Thee.* Let us contemplate with profound respect this particular sorrow of Jesus. Yes! the world had been deaf to His Voice: a very small number had profited by His instructions, or believed in His Divine Mission. And He seems to utter the same complaint from the Tabernacle to-day: *Father, the world hath not known Thee:* and the consolation experienced by the Sacred Heart, arises from the same source now as then: but these My faithful ones, who delight to do My bidding, My Apostles who carry on My work, these whom Thou hast given Me—know Thee. *They are not of the world: as I also am not of the world.* Are we amongst the consolers of the Heart of Jesus? Are we reproducing His life on earth in ourselves? Is our aim the same as His? *I have glorified Thee, O Father, on the earth. I have made known Thy Name, and will make it known.* Have we endeavoured by every means in our power, to bring souls to the knowledge of God? encouraged in our labours by this divine promise: *I pray for them also who through their word shall believe in me?*

II. POINT.

Jesus has shewn us the Father, but our knowledge of God should increase daily.

Be pleased, O Lord Jesus, to reveal to us, a deeper knowledge of the attributes and perfections of the Ever-Blessed Trinity! Through the contemplation of Thy example, and the study of Thy words, may we gain a clearer insight into the mysteries of God's love, and have a better understanding of His most holy Will. And may our knowledge of Him not only increase, but become more practical. Thou, O

Jesus, didst know the Father's Will so perfectly—His Will was Thine; and as we meditate upon Thy manner of fulfilling it, what an array of solid virtues, as displayed in Thy Life, arrests our attention. We wish to please God by our humility: let us think of that of Jesus, Who—*being the brightness of the Father's glory, and the Figure of His Substance, and upholding all things by the word of His power—debased Himself, taking the form of a servant*, and we shall become more humble. We find obedience difficult: let us look within the little house at Nazareth, where *Jesus is subject to Joseph and Mary*. We know that our patience is often at fault: let us consider Him, *Who when He was reviled did not revile; when He suffered, threatened not*. Our charity often fails: let us see our Master *eating with sinners*, and saying to the offending woman: *Neither will I condemn thee*. We do not persevere in the works of zeal we have undertaken: let us arise and follow our Lord, Who unweariedly accomplished His mission of *doing good*. We are discouraged at our non-success, or overjoyed when *all men speak well of us*: let us hear the Eternal Son of God saying: *I seek not My own glory: if I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing: there is One that seeketh and judgeth*. If inclined to recoil before any great or painful sacrifice: let us kneel beside Jesus in Gethsemani; and repeat after Him: *My God! Thy Will be done. . . .* So will the last petition of His most holy prayer be answered: *May the love wherewith Thou, Father, hast loved Me, be in them and I in them.*

COLLOQUY.

O Sweet Jesus, how dear to me are the lessons learned from Thy words in that Upper-Room! May they often recur to my mind, bringing thoughts of love and peace—of

resignation, and willingness to suffer—of consolation and of spiritual joy : awakening in my recollection also a grateful memory of Thy perfect practice of every virtue, and of the manner in which Thou hast continually glorified Thy Heavenly Father. Make my knowledge of Him to increase day by day : unite me more closely to Thyself, and send the Holy Spirit, to lead me into all truth.

RESOLUTION.

To do all my actions in union with Jesus.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

May the love wherewith Thou, Father, hast loved Me, be in them, and I in them.

PRAYER.

O Jesus, living in Mary.

Twenty-fourth Week after Pentecost, or last Week before Advent.—Sunday.

The Last Judgment.

Immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be moved. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of

Man in heaven : and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn : And they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with much power and majesty. And He shall send His Angels with a trumpet, and a great voice : and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds ; from the furthest parts of the heavens to the utmost bounds of them.

—S. MATT. XXIV.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us endeavour to represent to ourselves the Second Coming of the Son of God, and its attendant circumstances, as described by Him to His Disciples, when sitting together with them on Mount Olivet.

II. PRELUDE.

Give us all grace, O God, to prepare to meet Thee in the dreadful Day of the Last Judgment, that we may do so with joy.

I. POINT.

The end of the world.

Imagination well-nigh fails to afford us even a faint idea of the terrors of the Judgment Day ! The light of the sun shall turn pale and fade away, in the darkness which ensues the moon will not appear, and the stars *will fall from heaven upon the earth.* He Who in the beginning said : *Let there be light,* reverses His decree, and the black mantle of thick darkness envelops the world. To those in whom all spiritual light is extinct, how far more awful will that darkness be than to the children of God, who notwithstanding will have light within their souls, the dwelling-place of the Light of light. *The children of Israel had light in their*

dwellings, while the Egyptians were terror-struck on account of the *darkness which could be felt*. . . . And in that Last Day the trumpet of the Archangel shall wake the dead in their graves, and amid the convulsive throes of nature, they shall arise to judgment. *Then shall appear the Sign of the Son of Man.* O Cross, most brilliant, most glorious! Now is the hour of Thy greatest triumph. Woe indeed to such as have before spurned Thee, and trampled Thee under foot; but joy to all who have borne Thy weight, together with their Lord. Now dost thou herald His approach, Who, as Judge of all the earth, descends upon the clouds—seated on the great white Throne, in all His power and majesty, and accompanied by His holy Angels. Let us picture the countless millions of men, women, and children gathered together to receive their irreversible sentence of death or of life. The book filled with the records of conscience will be opened. And then will the Judge command His Angels, and they shall separate the saved from the lost, *as a shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats.*

II. POINT.

Jesus will speak—as a most just Judge.

He, the God-Man, the Saviour, the King of kings, will Himself pronounce our judgment—either favourable or unfavourable. Then shall He say to those on His Right Hand: *Come, ye blessed of My Father.* Why this title so full of joy and benediction? Because the elect will all have been imitators of God's Well-Beloved Son—in their lives united to Him; therefore He recognises them openly and blesses them. . . . *Come! possess you the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:* this

Kingdom is mine, I have conquered it through My sufferings and My death : I will not enjoy it alone; you are my living members, you have magnanimously shared in My combats—participate now in My triumph : come, not only to inhabit, but to possess the Kingdom of Heaven. . . . And to those on His Left Hand! who can meditate without fear on the words which the Just Judge will address to them? *Depart from Me, you cursed!* never again to see My Face : I longed to save you, but of your own free-will you have chosen to dwell eternally apart from Me. . . . To be separated from Jesus, and for ever ! How terrible a thought ! All those Thy creatures whom Thy hand hath formed, and for whom Thou didst shed Thy Precious Blood, O Saviour ! where are they going ? *Into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels.* Miserable victims of sin ! and yet one act of true contrition would have saved them, but it was made not ! . . . Let us turn back to the consideration of the ineffable joy of the elect who are already joining in chorus with the Cherubim and Seraphim as they sing : *To Him That sitteth on the Throne, and to the Lamb, benediction and honour, and glory, and power for ever and ever.*

COLLOQUY.

Help me, O Lord, in obedience to the teaching of Holy Church, to keep before my mind to-day the awful certainty of the Day of Judgment. Jesus ! Thou art on that day to be my Judge ! *And if the just shall scarcely be saved, where shall I appear ?* May it be upon Thy Right Hand, notwithstanding all my offences committed against Thee. I thank Thee for still giving me time wherein to do penance, and to merit a favourable sentence. Impress me deeply with a sense of the strictness of Thy Justice, so that I may strive to

attain that degree of perfection to which Thou callest me, with new fervour and courage. In my last hour, may I cast myself with all confidence into the arms of Thy mercy, and have grace to make an act of perfect contrition.

RESOLUTION.

Frequently during this day to place myself before the Judgment-seat of Christ.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Every one of us shall render account to God for Himself.

PRAYER.

Our Father, and Hail Mary.

Twenty-fourth Week after Pentecost.—Monday.

Jesus predicts the ruin of the Temple.

JESUS being come out of the Temple, went away : And His Disciples came to shew Him the buildings of the Temple : And He answering said to them : Do you see all these things? Amen, I say to you, there shall not be left here a stone upon a stone that shall not be destroyed.—S. MATT. xxiv.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves Jesus quitting the Temple

in order to proceed to Mount Olivet. His Disciples draw His attention to its architectural beauty.

II. PRELUDE.

Preserve us, O Lord, from the unhappiness of incurring Thine indignation, and of abusing the graces Thou dost lavish upon us so continually.

I. POINT.

The destruction of the Temple at Jerusalem.

The Temple of Jerusalem was one of the most magnificent structures ever raised by man, on account of the choice materials used in building it, the grandeur and regularity of its architecture, the precious ornaments and splendid gifts with which it was decorated. This Temple was the only one in the whole world where the true God was adored : the only one where sacrifices were offered, worthy of His esteem. The glory of the Lord was distinctly manifested there, under a great number of circumstances ; Holy Writ contained various passages which celebrated the august prerogatives of this, God's House. It might well have been supposed that He designed to preserve from ruin, even to the end of time, an edifice around which so many holy and religious associations gathered. But no ! The Temple was to be utterly destroyed. God proves to us by this example, that His justice, when once resolved to strike, will not spare ; and that the former objects of His especial predilection experience more severely than others the effects of His wrath. Who then can presume to think themselves secure on account of graces once received, but perhaps since then abused ? or to lull their consciences and their just fears to rest, and cease to watch over

themselves, because God has, at one time, accepted the dedication of their lives to Him, and adorned their souls with many gifts ?

II. POINT.

Cause of the destruction of the Temple.

Why was this beautiful edifice destroyed ? Because the exterior acts of worship therein practised were but vain ceremonials, void of all true piety ; and especially because the Jews, by rejecting the Messias, had completely severed themselves from those channels of grace by which salvation could reach them : they, as a nation, refused to participate in the merits of the Redeemer. Union with Jesus is then clearly necessary, if our homage and service are to be agreeable to God the Father. We should apply ourselves incessantly to the practice of this divine union, which produces in the heart, humility, a pure intention, and the sincere desire of pleasing God by real zeal for His glory. He cannot be deceived by any superficial appearance of excellence ; it is interior beauty—the beauty of a pure soul, which forms His delight. *True adorers, our Lord said, shall adore the Father in spirit and in truth : for the Father seeketh such to adore Him. God is a Spirit, and they that adore Him, must adore Him in spirit and in truth.* O God, fill our hearts and minds with the importance of this verity. May we carefully make use of all Thy gifts and graces, being apprehensive of losing any. Give us the spirit of holy fear, which shall prevent our trusting in aught that our conscience pronounces to be unreal. May the edifice of our piety be built up in Thee, O God, and adorned by Thine own hands, with the ornaments of solid virtue. Then a downfall we need never fear.

COLLOQUY.

As I hear Thee, O Jesus, predicting the destruction of the Temple, may I remember that it was pride, presumption, and ingratitude which brought about its ruin. Keep the temple of my heart free from all that may displease Thee ; may I, having dedicated it to Thy service, narrowly watch over it, to prevent at all times the entrance of the spirit of the world. Adorn it, O God, with many virtues ; to it may I constantly withdraw, to commune with Thee, and *to adore Thee in spirit and in truth.*

RESOLUTION.

To love and practise reality.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

God seeketh true adorers to adore Him.

PRAYER.

Our Father, and Hail Mary.

Twenty-fourth Week after Pentecost.—Tuesday.

Parable of the Ten Virgins.

Then shall the Kingdom of Heaven be like to ten virgins, who taking their lamps went out to meet the bridegroom and the bride : and five of them were foolish, and five were wise :

But the five foolish, having taken their lamps, did not take oil with them : But the wise took oil in their vessels, with the lamps.—S. MATT. XXV.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us imagine that we see these ten virgins going out to meet the Bridegroom and the Bride : exteriorly they are alike, and all are carrying lamps in their hands.

II. PRELUDE.

O Divine Jesus, give to us the wisdom of the prudent virgins, who within their lamps of mystic meaning, bore the oil of divine love.

I. POINT.

Five of them were foolish, and five were wise.

Our Lord in this parable, depicts the difference between those, who having been called to serve God, live nevertheless in tepidity and indifference about Him. All are represented by the ten virgins, who have been invited to celebrate the Marriage-Feast ; this is typical of the happiness of Heaven, where the Son of God will solemnize eternally His alliance with the Church. We, like the ten virgins, are all awaiting the arrival of the Bridegroom ; and in the meantime should be preparing, by the practice of good works and solid virtue, for our meeting with Him ; having a full supply of the oil of divine love in the lamp of our heart. All are bidden to make this remote preparation for His appearing, and those who are faithful fail not to do so. They are the truly wise. But the foolish forget all about this : they go on from day to day, living in tepidity ; they occupy their thoughts very seldom, if at all, with the

eternal concern of becoming more holy by filling their hearts with true piety. They content themselves with abstaining from actual vice, but allow their souls to be deprived of the merit of good actions. Such lethargy will in the end cost them dear. Insensible to the warning given them to shake off this torpor, unimpressed by the good example afforded by the wise virgins, they heap up to themselves eternal regrets. Is this our history? And perchance the Bridegroom is at our very doors! *Behold He cometh quickly, and His reward is with Him, to render to every one according to his works.*

II. POINT.

The joy of the wise, and the consternation of the foolish virgins, at the hour of death.

At midnight there was a cry made: Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye forth to meet Him: Then all the virgins arose and trimmed their lamps: And the foolish said to the wise: Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out: The wise said, go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves: Now while they went to buy, the Bridegroom came, and they that were ready went in with Him to the Marriage, and the door was shut. How vivid a picture of the consternation into which unfaithful souls will be thrown, at the moment when they are told to go forth to meet their Lord! Awaking to a sense of their unfitness to appear before Him, they will see the danger of their state, the abuse they have made of God's many graces, and their numberless faults in consequence. Too late, too late! their regrets will be unavailing; they cannot now partake in the merits acquired by the wise and holy. The gate of Heaven will

be closed, and their eager request for admittance will be answered thus by the Bridegroom from within : *I know you not* : never have you been one in heart with Me and My faithful ones; it is not I Whom you have tried to please, but yourselves and others: you have not been serving Me, but your own will and inclinations. . . . Oh, the bitterness of their regret! We seem to hear them say: Alas! we have had in our own hands—for our use—those very succours, which coming from God, would have ensured our eternal happiness: now the door is for ever shut against us! by our own fault are we excluded from the Marriage-Feast.—Let us not wait even until to-morrow, to renew in ourselves that fervour and love which will enable us to prepare for the arrival of the Beloved. Is the time too long? so that we can afford to waste a day, an hour, in vain delay? *They that were ready, went in with Him.*

COLLOQUY.

In mercy dost Thou instruct me, O Jesus, by this parable! Give me grace to follow the example of the wise virgins, and to appreciate the means of sanctification now within my reach. Make me careful and attentive concerning the supply of the oil of divine love, so that the lamp of my soul being constantly fed by it, may be brightly burning in that midnight hour of my death, when it shall be announced to me that Thou, the Celestial Bridegroom, comest. May I, being ready, go in with Thee. And this grace, I ask, not only for myself, but for all those also for whom I ought to pray.

RESOLUTION.

To recommence the practice of virtues I have lately neglected.

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THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Behold the Bridegroom cometh!

PRAYER.

Soul of Christ.

Twenty-fourth Week after Pentecost.—Wednesday.

Jesus foretells His Passion to His Disciples.

Jesus taking the twelve, began to tell them the things that should befall Him. Saying : Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man shall be betrayed to the chief-priests, and to the scribes and ancients, and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles. And they shall mock Him, and spit on Him, and scourge Him, and kill Him.
—S. MARK X.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us imagine that we see Jesus on the road which leads to Jerusalem, accompanied by the twelve Apostles : He is on His way to sacrifice Himself for us.

II. PRELUDE.

Grant, O Lord, that our love for Thee may make us prompt and magnanimous in executing all that Thou demandest of us.

I. POINT.

Jesus testified His love by delivering Himself to death for us : we likewise testify ours by suffering.

When the days of His Assumption were accomplishing, Jesus set His face to go to Jerusalem. Our Lord was not ignorant of the conspiracy which the chief-priests and Pharisees were forming against His Person : He knew what the issue of it would be : He perceived the hour of His Death approaching : He foresaw the fearful torments which would attend it. Notwithstanding He willingly repaired to Jerusalem, though it was to be within a few days, the scene of His Passion. Here we see to what a degree Jesus loved us ! He went forward to suffer for us gladly. Ought we not to be ready to prove how much we love Him ? and with a generous spirit make the sacrifices His love demands ? enduring with patience, the sorrow, pain, and humiliation which His Providence bestows on us. All sufferings should to us be infinitely precious, as they are the purchase-money of the eternal Kingdom, prepared for us. They are also a pledge of God's love—a priceless token of it. Have we learned how to value sufferings aright ? Perhaps, even yet, we look upon them as evils to be repulsed with all the energy of our will. But in future, shall we not resolve to accept them in faith ?—to enter into Thy designs, O Lord, and so to make a holy use of them ? remembering that they can but (if rightly borne) promote our sanctification and salvation.

II. POINT.

It is to our eternal interest to be generous towards God.

We seem so often to forget the unspeakable advantages of

loyalty in the service of our King : we lose sight of the fact that He Who is All-Good and All-Powerful, will compensate us a hundred-fold for the efforts and sacrifices we make for Him. It could hardly be possible (if we reflected duly on such a course) that we should fear to renounce what is evil in ourselves, and to receive in exchange the good that Jesus offers us. In place of creatures—of some form of selfishness—which we make a sacrifice well-pleasing to Him, He gives us Himself, with all His infinite merits, and the treasures of His mercy. Of how many spiritual favours do we not deprive ourselves, when we yield to our natural repugnances, and our cowardice. One victory, gained over ourselves, gives us new strength to return, when required, to the combat ; and at the same time our Divine Master will recompense our courage and love, by causing us to experience hidden delights, far sweeter than the mere natural gratifications we have sacrificed. We may well blush to think of the horror and dread with which even the anticipation of a humiliation, the thought of a coming discomfiture may sometimes have filled us. Why do we not rather seize every opportunity of repaying the love of Jesus ? and set our faces to go along the path that leads towards the hill of sacrifice ?

COLLOQUY.

O my Dear Saviour, penetrate my soul, I beseech Thee, with so lively a sense of thankfulness as I contemplate Thy steps towards the scene of Thy Passion, and the effects of Thy excessive charity, that I may truly desire to suffer in some way for Thee. I have lost many, many opportunities of thus testifying my love and gratitude ; not lost them merely by letting them pass unnoticed and unused through indifference, but I confess that I have spurned occasions

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(presented me by Thy pierced Hand) of enduring in a spirit of joyous willingness some trial—some mortification—some sacrifice. Forgive me all this, O Jesus. I promise to be more loyal in future.

RESOLUTION.

To ask of Jesus a real love of sufferings.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

He was offered, because it was His own Will.

PRAYER.

Take, O Lord, and receive.

Twenty-fourth Week after Pentecost.—Thursday.

Jesus warns us that darkness may overtake us.

The night cometh when no man can work. . . . Walk whilst you have the light, that the darkness overtake you not: He that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.—S. JOHN IX.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves Jesus, as He, in His desire to save all men, uses words of warning; thus to awaken a sense of fear in the minds of those who are slothfully spending their day of grace.

II. PRELUDE.

O Lord, speak such words to us as shall arouse us from a state of carelessness and unconcern about our soul's welfare.

I. POINT.

We should profit by divine light, lest it be taken away from us.

For many years the light of the Sun of Justice had been shining in sight of the Jewish people; this light was about to pass away, and again a warning is addressed to them : *Walk whilst you have the light, that the darkness overtake you not.* Before the close of another year, during which we have been visited by many illuminating graces, Jesus seems to warn us also to make full use of the enlightenment afforded to our souls by their means, lest they be taken away. How often have we not witnessed a diminution of faith, and even a total withdrawal of it, where this most precious gift has been slighted and despised? If we hesitate in our choice of good, if we mistake the false for the real, because we shut out the light of truth, we are going very far towards the incurring of the punishment of being allowed to *walk in darkness, not knowing whither we go.* The sacred rays of grace will become, by imperceptible degrees, obscured in the soul, and after a while quite extinguished. But if we take heed to the kind, but grave warnings Jesus gives us, through the medium of our conscience—His voice within us—we shall go forward *while we have the light.* Now is the *day of salvation*: *The night, in which no man can work,* may overtake us unawares, and if we make not good use of the

daylight, we may fail to reach the desired end of our journey, while yet there is time.

II. POINT.

We should live in the light of the love of God.

If we live in this light, we shall daily grow in the knowledge of God. His Divine attributes will unfold themselves, our perceptive faculties will become clearer, and the mysteries of His grace will be the constant theme of our contemplation. It will define our duties, guide our steps, and render us cheerful even in the midst of affliction. Under its influence we shall feel the action of God's Presence in our souls ; we shall understand that a certain vice—a certain passion—a certain habit—He wishes us to correct. We shall be drawn to the performing of this good deed—to the practice of that virtue—to adopt some exercise of piety—to make a sacrifice. Whatever form the inspiration takes, if it comes from God, must we not follow it? By the light of His love can we not perceive that He is, at this moment, asking us to renew our donation of ourselves to Him. Let us not refuse Him ; or we may recede a step, and that light may seem more distant, and less clear. Mists arise so quickly, and come between us and it, if we allow nature to hold us back ; while other and darker passions still, may completely blind us. Now, when our thoughts are carried on into the future, when we meditate especially upon the life of preparation we should be now living, if we would not be ashamed at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, we may make the prophet's word our own : *We will live in His Sight—we shall know and we shall follow on, that we may know the Lord.*

COLLOQUY.

May I not again expose myself to the danger of losing sight of the light of Thy love, O God ! but may I follow it closely, that it may discover to me Thy purposes in my regard, and that I easily discern the way along which I should go forward, *even to perfect day*. No more lingering—no more following false lights—such is my resolve : neither will I again permit self-love to blind the eyes of my soul, lest spiritual darkness overtake me. I thank Thee, O Jesus, for Thy timely warning, and ask of Thee that I may ever live in Thy Sight.

RESOLUTION.

To follow all God's inspirations.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Let us walk in the light of the Lord.

PRAYER.

O Jesus, living in Mary.

Twenty-fourth Week after Pentecost.—Friday.

The hatred of the chief-priests and others against Jesus.

The chief-priests and Pharisees gathered a council, and said ; What do we, for this Man doth many miracles ? If we let Him alone so, all will believe in Him. But one of them,

named Caiphas, being the high-priest that year, said to them : You know nothing. Neither do you consider that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. From that day therefore they devised to put Him to death.—S. JOHN XI.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us enter that council-chamber, where men infatuated by jealousy, are assembled to take measures for putting Jesus to death.

II. PRELUDE.

O God, may we have a greater horror of that vice of jealousy, which actuated the enemies of Thy Son, and determined them on effecting His death.

I. POINT.

The very goodness and power of Jesus hardened the hearts of His enemies.

The resurrection of Lazarus had produced much joy in the house at Bethany : it had confirmed the faith of the Disciples, and converted many persons. How then could it be that this miracle had the effect of hardening yet more the chief-priests and the Pharisees? and of making them form a resolution which rendered them guilty of a crime, more enormous than any other which could possibly be committed? It was because their hearts were badly disposed. The works of God do not produce the same effect on all who witness them : upright hearts find in them an abundant source of grace and enlightenment ; but the evil hearts of those who are blinded by passion, discover in them fresh food for their

malice, and make them an occasion of repeated sin. God places the light of truth before the eyes of all : such as desire to profit by it become good : such as pay no heed to it remain in a condition of tepidity : such as repel His grace become actually guilty of grievous sin. There cannot be a more serious question than this, which each one should often put to himself : What effect has the goodness of God on me ? What results are produced by holy inspirations, good examples, and the reception of the Sacraments ? In perverse souls, the greatest miracles of grace may make no lastingly good impression. Pharao is the representative of such as, in every age, reject the truth of God in their stubborn pride, and allow the demon of jealousy to possess them : *He, we are told, increased his sin, and his heart was hardened, and it was made exceeding hard.* May God, in His mercy, preserve us from becoming hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

II. POINT.

The cruelty and injustice of jealousy.

The chief-priests and Pharisees, far from endeavouring to rectify their judgment concerning our Lord, permitted their bitter feelings of jealousy to condemn Him as worthy of death. They had been witnesses of His sanctity—of His miracles ; they had listened to the wisdom of His doctrine ; but they did not recognise Him to be the Messias—the true Son of God—because they would not. The holiness of Jesus was a reproach to them : they feared that the honour and reverence the people were attaching to His Name, would eclipse that claimed by themselves, for as they said : *All the world is gone after Him.* He had on several

occasions unveiled their hypocrisy and cupidity. No ! there was not a shadow of justice in the council they held : it was the spirit of envy that presided there. And there is no vice more cruel, more unpitying in its hate. What innumerable crimes have been committed through envy and jealousy, since that hour when Cain became a murderer ! How many sins, how much strife and trouble ! even amongst those who like the chief-priests, ought certainly to be renowned for piety. But is jealousy an entire stranger to our hearts ? Has envy never found a resting-place in our minds ? Do we dislodge the one and the other the very moment we are conscious of their presence there ? Doubtless we should not fail to do so, if we had only once looked within that council-chamber, where the chief-priests and Pharisees gathered together *to devise how they might put Jesus to death*, and considered the spirit which animated that assembly.

COLLOQUY.

O Jesus ! envy has often stayed too long in my heart ; but I intend now to keep it banished thence for ever, if Thou wilt assist me by giving me an increase of pure charity. Make me glad and thankful that others can render Thee higher service than myself. Could I ever have been so little desirous for Thy honour and glory, as to have made the result of my own poor efforts to promote them, the standard of others' success ? How pitiful a sentiment ! I blush to think that I have ever entertained it. Let me henceforth rejoice to think that I am surpassed on every hand : help me only to do my best, and then to be unfeignedly glad that others can yet do better.

RESOLUTION.

To forbid the entrance into my heart of envy and jealousy.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

For envy they delivered Jesus.

PRAYER.

Our Father, and Hail Mary.

Twenty-fourth Week after Pentecost.—Saturday.

How Jesus glorified His Father.

Now is My soul troubled : And what shall I say ? Father, save me from this hour. But for this cause came I unto this hour : Father, glorify Thy Name : A voice therefore came from Heaven : I have glorified it, and will glorify it again.—S. JOHN XII.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves Jesus, troubled at the sight of His Passion ; yet accepting it with the greatest magnanimity, on account of the glory which would accrue from it to His Father.

II. PRELUDE.

Heart of Jesus, give us grace to sacrifice ourselves also, to promote God's interests, and the accomplishment of His Will.

I. POINT.

Jesus our Example, devotes Himself to death, by this means to glorify His Father.

Jesus had just declared to Andrew and Philip (when they told Him that certain Gentiles were desirous to see Him), that *the hour was come*, when His ministry amongst men was about to cease ; but that if any continued to believe in Him, and to serve Him, they should be honoured by God. He Himself withdrew from worldly honour : from it, under the shadow thrown forward by His Cross, He would hide Himself. . . . At the thought of the nearness of His Passion He said : *Now is My soul troubled. And what shall I say ? Father, save Me from this hour :* but immediately overcoming, by the ardour and generosity of His zeal, this momentary fear (which He would not have permitted to possess Him even for so short a time, had He not desired to merit for us the grace of triumphing over the most terrible repugnances of nature), He added : *For this cause came I unto this hour : Father, glorify Thy Name :* I have taken upon Me this human Body in order to offer It in sacrifice to the Divine Majesty of God : spare Me not then, O My Father, and since Thou art to be glorified by My Death, I will endure it willingly with all its torments. . . . Such was the greatness of the longing of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, to do all to the glory of God ; and that we should understand what

is the source of true love, and what are its effects. Let us unite the sentiments of our heart to that of our Dear Lord : offering ourselves to be immolated with Him, and repeating with all the intensity of a true desire : *Father, glorify Thy Name in us also.*

III. POINT.

The devotedness of Jesus must be the source of our courage.

We are permitted to increase our merit by constantly reminding God, as it were, of our readiness to suffer for His Sake. *Father, glorify Thy Name in us.* But—for what other purpose are we in the world? have we not besides, embraced a life of sacrifice? And are we not convinced that whatever trials may be reserved for us, Jesus Himself will be our Strength, our Light, our Helper? *If any man minister to Me, let him follow Me,* imitate Me in taking up his Cross : *him will the Father honour.* *He that hateth his life in this world, keepeth it unto life eternal.* It is especially when we are in a state of pain and anguish, either bodily or spiritual, that we give glory to God, because—our will (like the human will of His Beloved Son), is then in complete abeyance : the Divine Will ruling supremely in us. Here even we have a great reward in that enjoyment of perfect peace, which quickly succeeds, or rather accompanies, acts of self-abnegation, and the immolation of our own will. And is it not likewise a cause of happiness to know that God can trust us with the honour of His Name? and that He sends His Angels to bring us word that in us, as in Jesus, *He hath glorified it, and will glorify it again?*

COLLOQUY.

Let me not, O God, so often forget for what cause I have consecrated myself to Thee—for what purpose I have entered the religious life. Was it not that I might strive to resemble in all things Thy Beloved Son, *Who pleased not Himself*, but in *Whom Thou wert well pleased*. Therefore, I beseech Thee, O Father, let me also glorify Thee as He did, by living a life of perpetual sacrifice ; and by being ready to accept the agony of my death-hour in the same spirit of self-immolation. In the example of Jesus will I seek for strength and courage. Receive my renewed offering up of myself in union with Him, and dispose of me as Thou wilt.

RESOLUTION.

To make each sacrifice in union with Jesus—in His strength.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Do all to the glory of God.

PRAYER.

Our Father, and Hail Mary.

MEDITATIONS

FOR THE TIME (VARYING IN DURATION) WHICH MAY INTERVENE
BETWEEN THE TWENTY-THIRD SATURDAY AFTER PENTECOST
AND THE LAST SUNDAY BEFORE ADVENT.

Last Week but four before Advent.—Sunday.

The Cure of the Leper.

And when JESUS was come down from the mountains, great multitudes followed Him: And behold a leper came and adored Him, saying: Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean: And JESUS stretching forth His Hand, touched him, saying: I will, be thou made clean.—S. MATT. VIII.

I. PRELUDE.

We can imagine that we see Jesus at the foot of the mountain. He is followed by a great multitude of people.

II. PRELUDE.

Grant us, O Jesus, to draw from this meditation both faith and trust in Thy goodness and mercy.

I. POINT.

The devotion of our Lord to His ministry amongst men.

Well may we gaze admiringly at our Lord ! He had just been speaking for several hours to the assembled multitude; but fatigue did not lessen His patience and His affability. The crowd pressed around Him, wondering at that which they had heard ; those words of truth and life, which had been uttered by our Adorable Saviour. And now His attention was attracted by a leper, who presented himself before Him, to be cured of his leprosy. His sad appearance inspired the bystanders with mingled pity and horror, but he heeds them not : prostrating himself before the Heavenly Physician, full of confidence in His power, yet of resignation to His Will, he cries out : *Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.* In these few and simple words, we see both trust and faith. Then Jesus, Whose compassionate Heart seeks only to relieve the unfortunate, being touched with pity, replied : *I will, be thou made clean.* Let us put ourselves in the place of the leper, and ask our Lord to pronounce over us the same powerful and healing words. Thou seest, O Jesus, that our souls are tainted with the leprosy of sin : in all faith and confidence we beg of Thee to purify them, knowing that Thou wilt hear our petition, as Thou didst that of the poor leper.

II. POINT.

Jesus is ever ready to heal those who acknowledge their misery and their need.

We are told that the leper adored Jesus ; he knelt in His Presence as a suppliant ; he had received the gift of faith,

by which he believed that Jesus had the power to heal him ; he now made use of it. Are we making use of this precious gift ? When we kneel, as suppliants before Jesus, do we believe that he can and will grant our requests ? do we make them in simple words, and simple trust ? When we ask for some bodily cure, for some temporal benefits for ourselves—or others—we too should say : *If thou wilt* ; if it be for Thy greater honour and glory—if it be for the furtherance of our eternal good. Let us make our petition according to our desires—speak with our Lord of our troubles, whatever they may be ; but all along, our chief wish should be, that His Divine Will should be accomplished, and His glory advanced. Yet, when we ask for the cure of our soul, our confidence amounts to assurance, for this He cannot refuse us ; He will most undoubtedly stretch forth His right Hand to save us. The law excluded lepers from the society of men ; and by our sin we exclude ourselves from the company of Jesus ; but, to ask for his recovery, this leper dared to approach. It is thus with ourselves : disfigured by sin, we must remain at a distance from our Saviour, until we turn towards Him to obtain the cleansing of our souls. He did not turn away in disgust, but touched the leper ; He acts in the same way with regard to repentant sinners, and will say likewise to them : *I will, be thou made clean*. How should this encourage us to trust in the mercy of our Saviour, notwithstanding our many sins : humbling ourselves repeatedly before Him, let us ask Him yet more and more to purify us by His grace.

COLLOQUY.

O Divine Physician, I adore Thee, and acknowledge that marvellous power, by which Thou canst order health to

return to both our bodies and our souls. Thou art so full of compassion and of goodness, that Thou deignest to relieve our misery. A single act of Thy Will, a single word spoken by Thee, suffices: I beg of Thee to bestow on me chiefly the cure of my spiritual maladies,—entrusting me with health and strength, to use for Thy greater glory, if Thou wilt.

RESOLUTION.

To go at once to Jesus, whatever be my failings or misery.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.

PRAYER.

O Jesus, living in Mary.

Last Week but four before Advent.—Monday.

The Marriage in Cana of Galilee.

Fill the water-pots with water, and they filled them up to the brim: And Jesus said to them:—Draw out now, and carry to the chief steward of the feast.—S. JOHN II.

I. PRELUDE.

We see Jesus and Mary honouring with their presence the Marriage-Feast in Cana.

II. PRELUDE.

O good Mother, who hast such power over the Heart of Thy Divine Son ; ask of Him to change our hearts, which are so cold and indifferent, into hearts full of love for Him and for thee.

I. POINT.

The marvellous effects of grace.

If our loving Saviour, touched by the anxiety of the bridegroom when the wine failed, performed at the request of His Mother, a miracle to calm this natural solicitude, with what merciful goodness will He not listen to the requests which this same tender Mother daily addresses to Him on our behalf ? How many graces have we not obtained through her intercession ? Have we not found, by happy experience, that whereas we, at one time, served God through fear, we now serve Him with love and joy ? The miracle is reproduced—the water is changed into wine ; that celestial wine which so inebriates the soul, that it can only think of God, see God, and live for God. According to Saint Bernard, the soul thus filled with divine love, feels no longer any grief, wearies not in any labour, and suffers contempt without knowing it. The Divine Spirit of our Lord, in thus taking possession of the soul, causes human passion to disappear, and renders His union with it entire, by communicating to it all that is of truest virtue ; not permitting the higher life of the soul to be troubled nor displaced by the lower,—the superior by the inferior. Thus it enjoys perfect tranquillity, a constant, unalterable joy ; it yields to no fear, for it reposes in God ; so that nothing can alarm it, or affect its peace and happiness. Even in this life such a soul

enjoys a perpetual feast, being fed with spiritual meat and drink, of which the world knows nothing: for they consist of those unspeakable consolations, which, even they who taste of them, cannot describe. But it is most certain, that one word from Jesus, a look even, is sufficient to produce a change in our hearts yet more marvellous than that which was effected within the water-pots of stone, at the Marriage-feast.

II. POINT.

Jesus, the Celestial Bridegroom of our souls, gives not the best wine at the beginning of the spiritual banquet.

Jesus, at the marriage in Cana, favoured the guests with the performance of His first miracle:—what privileges has He not in store for those, His chosen ones, who partake of the Banquet He himself spreads for them! At this spiritual marriage-feast, the guests drink of that cup wherein has been poured *the wine which maketh virgins*; partaking of that sacred chalice, with delight they quench their thirst for God. They receive its mystic contents—the Precious Blood of Him Who espouses them to Himself; and who thus communicates to them His Life.—This is a miracle of miracles; through it our Lord consecrates—makes divine even here—the celestial marriage He contracts with His faithful ones. This is the foretaste of the Marriage-Banquet of the Lamb; where the happy guests will be, not only in the Presence, but in the enjoyment and actual possession of the Heavenly Spouse; they will be replenished with happiness, the happiness of God Himself. Then shall we drink of the best wine reserved for that unending Marriage-Feast; then will be the hour of recompense for those *who are come out of great*

tribulation, having shared in the sufferings and humiliations of Jesus.

COLLOQUY.

O Mary, my dear Mother, thou lovest with a special love those who have consecrated themselves to be the Spouses of Thy Adorable Son ; make me through Thy protecting care, to become more faithful to the special graces granted to me, that I may win the loving regard of the Divine Heart of Jesus, and participate in the Eternal Banquet, where the sacred union will be consummated which I have here contracted with Him.

RESOLUTION.

I ask of Jesus, through Mary, the grace to spend this day holily.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Whatever He shall say to you, do ye.

PRAYER.

Soul of Christ.

Last Week but four before Advent.—Tuesday.

Jesus the Author and Finisher of Faith.

Looking on Jesus, the Author and Finisher of Faith.—
Heb. XII.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves the Divine Saviour, in the midst of the people— instructing them. The noble majesty of His Person, united to the gentleness of His manner, drew multitudes after Him, and won their hearts.

II. PRELUDE.

Grant, O Jesus, that in listening to Thy divine teaching, we may learn how we too may be animated by Thy words and example, in our daily life.

I. POINT.

Jesus, the wisdom of the Father, instructed men for three years, in His own Person.

In having God for our Master—the Eternal Wisdom for our Teacher—have we ever considered thoroughly the honour conferred on us? The Light of light came in Person to dispel our darkness; to make us understand our divine origin, our sublime destinies, and the way which leads to the heights of everlasting glory. The mercy of God and the greatness of the soul of man are put before us in the strongest light, by Him who is Light. It is most instructive to reflect upon the Mission of the Incarnate Wisdom of the Father. He journeyed from place to place, visiting the towns and villages of the Holy Land, to teach the way of salvation. Wishing to regenerate mankind, and to make of them a holy people, He gave them a holy doctrine, which gathered up the teaching of the old Law into one great precept—that of divine Love: a doctrine which should comprise all true religion, with its externals, its maxims, and its reality.

Let us listen to what the Adorable Master tells us, as repeated by His Beloved Apostle :—*If you continue in My words, you shall be My disciples indeed.* Jesus on earth instructs us still.

II. POINT.

Since His Ascension Jesus continues His teaching by His Spirit, as He promised.

The zeal of our Lord was full of power and ardour. He would have enkindled in every part of the world the celestial fire He came to bring on the earth ; but His zeal was regulated by the Heavenly Father's Will ; therefore He remained in the land of His Birth. He did great wonders, and performed astonishing miracles ; and yet He said, that His disciples should do greater works than He had done. Jesus Himself prepared the way by His teaching for the coming of the Paraclete : the Apostles and those who were formed in His school, and under His own Eyes, could not be perfectly prepared for their mission, and to preach the Gospel with success, until after the descent of the Holy Spirit—*Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son.* Jesus therefore promised to send Him, to teach them all truth. Our Saviour taught orally when He was on earth—founded the Church—laid down His law of Love—and showed the way to Heaven through suffering, by the example of His Passion and Death. Since the Day of Pentecost, He teaches us by His Spirit, which descends into our souls, to inspire, to enlighten, to guide, to strengthen, and to instruct us, in the Will of God.

COLLOQUY.

O Holy Spirit, Who didst animate our Adorable Master.

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in the work of His ministry amongst men, come Thou and give me grace to obey His law of Love. Make known to me that which He asks of me, in proof of my love for Him; and strengthen me to overcome all obstacles that might prevent my following Thy holy inspirations. O Jesus, Thou didst say that our Father in Heaven would give the Good Spirit to them that ask Him. Thanks be to Thee, O God! I adore Thee, O Holy and Undivided Trinity.

RESOLUTION.

To persevere in the doctrine taught by Jesus Christ, and to follow the inspirations of the Holy Ghost.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

If you love Me, keep My commandments.

PRAYER.

Our Father, and Hail Mary.

Last Week but four before Advent.—Wednesday.

We must courageously own that Jesus is our Master.

He that shall be ashamed of Me and of My words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when He shall come in His majesty, and that of His Father, and that of the holy angels.—S. LUKE IX.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us take to heart these words of our Lord, as if we ourselves had heard them, together with the Disciples.

II. PRELUDE.

O Jesus, grant that by our lives we may confess before all men that we belong to Thee; that Thou art our Lord and Master.

I. POINT.

The unhappy condition of a soul that chooses to side with the enemies of Jesus.

Alas! there are many, who by their lives openly profess not to belong to Jesus, who deny that He has any claim to their service—to their allegiance. He would be their Saviour, and they refuse to be saved by Him: He would be their Redeemer, and they will not be bought back at the price of His Precious Blood: He would be their Advocate with the Father, and they reject the idea of placing their cause in His Hands: He would be their Shepherd, and they prefer to remain outside the true Fold: He will be their Judge, and they continue to deny Him, notwithstanding the solemn threat that if they do so, *He will deny them before His Father Who is in Heaven.* He will condemn them to spend eternity amongst those, whom they have chosen for their friends and allies during this life. These miserable souls, after having been by them despoiled of the apparel of grace, of virtue, of merits—having been robbed of the ornament of innocence, have connived with the plunderers, and accepted their terms—made peace with

them, at the expense of losing for ever the friendship of God. They have purchased a false and fatal peace, and at what a sacrifice ! O Jesus, we turn from this sad picture to Thee, and beseech of Thee to preserve us from ever giving ourselves into the hand of Thine enemies : may we never be so faithless as to deny that Thou art our chosen Friend, but own Thee for such, although the avowal might cost us our lives : *For what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his soul ?* By a miracle of grace an enemy may become a faithful subject—therefore, let us not cease to pray.

II. POINT.

The true peace enjoyed by those who confess Jesus before the world.

I will confess them before My Father Who is in Heaven. Are not these words, coming from the Lips of Jesus, quite sufficient to assure to us true and lasting peace ? What more could we wish for ? What we have done for Him—faintly and feebly though it be—He will do for us ; and His word of commendation will secure for us the approbation of the Eternal Father, and will be our passport to the kingdom prepared for us. To confess Jesus Christ aright is to evidence by our thoughts, our words, and our deeds, that we belong wholly and entirely to Him ; to shew that we are completely under his sway ; that we glory in having Him for our King. And yet are we not cowardly sometimes when His honour is at stake ? If we do not go over to the enemy, yet do we not fight as if we were half ashamed of our choice of a ruler ? Sometimes a word—just a little word—would do so much for our Lord, but we leave it unsaid for want of courage : sometimes a single action would lift the stan-

dard of the Cross higher, but we are too slothful to do it : sometimes we might repair our omissions of duty, but we are indifferent to the loss our Master has suffered by our negligence. Let Him be able to trust His honour in our hands more entirely ; to reckon upon our fidelity in His service, even though the world and Satan are arrayed against us. We may have to fight single-handed, but Jesus is watching the combat, and will stretch forth His Hand to protect us. We cannot hope to be Martyrs in deed, and thus prove our loyalty ; but we may all be Confessors, and look for their reward.

COLLOQUY.

O my Lord Jesus, let me never again be ashamed of Thee. Forgive me for that cowardice, which has sometimes overcome my better resolutions to confess Thee unflinchingly, to procure Thine honour by word or action. And let my every thought bear witness to my fidelity to Thy love, and my willingness to suffer aught that it may bring upon me of reproach, or even disgrace.—In that Great Day, O Jesus, confess me before Thy Father, as Thine own true servant.

RESOLUTION.

To be more faithful in confessing Jesus Christ.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Recompense shall be made thee at the resurrection of the just.

PRAYER.

Our Father, and Hail Mary.

Last Week but four before Advent.—Thursday.

Conversion of the Samaritan Woman.

JESUS came to a city of Samaria, called Sichar. Now Jacob's well was there. JESUS therefore being wearied with His journey, sat down on the well: There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: JESUS saith to her: Give Me to drink.—ST. JOHN IV.

I. PRELUDE.

We see our Saviour Jesus sitting by the well, patiently waiting for the woman whom He desired to convert.

II. PRELUDE.

O Loving Jesus, grant that, while considering the goodness with which Thou dost draw souls unto Thee, by the power of Thy preventing grace, our hearts may be replenished with love and thankfulness.

I. POINT.

The wisdom with which Jesus procures our salvation.

After many times soliciting a soul to turn to God, Jesus waiteth still that He may have mercy, as He waited on that day when He was wearied, for the Samaritan woman. It was not by chance that He found Himself by the well-side when she came to draw water:—divine wisdom knows how to combine circumstances that they may issue in the con-

version of souls. Can we not recall the multitude of ways that Jesus employed to attract us to His service? a certain concurrence of events brought about—in a manner which appeared quite natural—supernatural consequences; they had been planned by Providence, so as gradually to break the ties which bound us to the world; or the chains with which sin had enslaved us. Can we sufficiently admire the infinite wisdom and goodness of God in our regard? The thought of His patience, the memory of His forbearance, should awaken in our hearts such loving thankfulness, that we might spend our lives in giving Him fresh proofs of our gratitude.

II. POINT:

To effect the conversion of a soul, Jesus often asks of it a little kindness—a small act of charity; and then repays it largely.

In converting the woman of Samaria, Jesus began by asking her to give Him a little water. Thus it is that He draws a soul out of a state of sin or tepidity, by causing it to see in what way it can render God a small service. Each one of us knows what act of charity, of sacrifice, or of humility He requires of us. He tells us by some passing event, perhaps by a striking coincidence—by good counsel—or by an interior Voice. Happy are they who imitate the Samaritan woman: she at once appreciated the excellence of the gift Jesus bestowed on her in reward for her act of charity towards Himself: we see her yielding to His gracious importunity, and receiving with eagerness the living water which flows so plentifully from His Sacred Heart. Ah! if we too knew the gift of God!—how much more earnestly should we pray that the fountain of water might in us *spring*

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up into life everlasting, so that we might never again thirst after any vanity or pleasure of the world; never go back into it, to draw consolation or natural satisfaction.

COLLOQUY.

O my Saviour, how marvellous are the effects of Thy grace in those souls that are sincere and teachable. Not only was the Samaritan woman converted, during Thy short visit, O Jesus, to Sichar, but many in the city owned Thee as the Saviour of the world;—while Thy chosen people the Jews, after Thy three years' ministry amongst them, remained in their state of wilful blindness. Seeing how much more difficult it is to rekindle the love of God in a soul which has been once enlightened, and has afterwards become cold and indifferent, I pray that I may never fall away from Thee, my Jesus, but, while doing little things for love of Thee, trust that Thou wilt give me largely of the living water of Thy grace.

RESOLUTION.

To be attentive to give to Jesus whatever He asks of me—opening my heart to receive the gift of God.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Lord, give me this water, that I may not thirst.

PRAYER.

Soul of Christ.

Last Week but four before Advent.—Friday.

The Living Water is the Gift of God.

JESUS saith to the Samaritan woman : If thou didst know the gift of God, and Who is He that saith to thee, Give Me to drink ; thou perhaps wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water.—S. JOHN IV.

I. PRELUDE.

We represent to ourselves Jesus still sitting on the well ; by the benevolence of His words disposing the heart of the woman of Samaria to true conversion.

II. PRELUDE.

Grant, O Jesus, that in meditating upon the secret manner in which Thou dost convey grace to the soul, we may learn the value of Thy gifts, and how to appreciate them better.

I. POINT.

How precious are the gifts of grace !

God dispenses to His creatures the blessings of this life with excessive liberality ; daily bread—health—honour—riches—they are participated in by the faithful and by the unfaithful. *Our Father, Who is in Heaven, maketh His Sun to rise upon the good and bad, and raineth upon the just and unjust.* These latter have often indeed the larger

share, because God esteems worldly advantages too little to allow them to be dearly bought. But with regard to supernatural blessings—the enlightenment of the soul—the inspirations which make us desire to belong entirely to God, and attract us powerfully to the practice of those virtues which are God-like—these good things are so esteemed by our Heavenly Father, that the Blood of His Beloved Son was the price paid to obtain them for us. Therefore they may not be thrown away ;—through the Church they are granted to His children, being multiplied and increased in those privileged souls, who by their faithful use of these highest spiritual blessings, will turn them to account for Heaven. To all such as He would make partakers of them, Jesus says, *If thou didst know the gift of God ?* If thou didst but fully comprehend its value ? Let us beseech Him to discover it to us, to make us understand, at the same time, that the gift of God is not bestowed on account of our own merits, but is the fruit of the infinite merits of the Death of our Saviour. Appreciating it more and more, may it become to us so precious, that abandoning all else, sacrificing all else, we may be intent only on making a right use of that which God has given us ; and remember that *to whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required.*

II. POINT.

How desirable are the gifts of grace !

He would have given thee living water. Why does Jesus thus speak of the gift of God, under the similitude of flowing water ? Doubtless to make us understand the numerous effects produced by it. As water is indispensable in many ways—under ordinary exterior circumstances of life—so is the gift of grace necessary for our spiritual needs. Water

cleanses that which is soiled; so grace purifies from sin, and effaces its stains. Water refreshes the plants, and fertilizes the earth ; so grace causes good desires to spring up, and renders our good will vigorous and productive. How precious are the living waters of grace ! how great the happiness of being able constantly to draw them in abundance from their very Source; that sacred and mysterious Source—the Heart of Jesus ! Every day, every hour, He is waiting by the well for us, to ask of us some act of love, and in return to give us *the water of life, gratis.*

COLLOQUY.

How immense is Thy charity, O Jesus! How can I show Thee that I am grateful for all the ineffable gifts Thou didst bring from Heaven ?—the gift of Thy Divinity, of Thy Merits, of Thy Life in the mystery of the Incarnation—the gift of Thyself in the Holy Eucharist—the gift of my vocation, to which Thou hast united so many graces, so many benefits. Deign yet to add to all these the gift of perseverance in Thy service; and grant that my fidelity may become perfect, and be accompanied by a great love for Thee, my Saviour.

RESOLUTION.

To think often during the day of the gifts our Lord has bestowed on me, and to see how I am making use of them.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

If thou didst know the gift of God.

PRAYER.

Take, O Lord, and receive.

Last Week but four before Advent.—Saturday.

Mary is our example in the practice of lesser duties.

Fear not Mary, for thou hast found grace with God.—
S. LUKE II.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves the perfect manner in which Mary always performed the ordinary duties of her daily life.

II. PRELUDE.

Grant, O God, that as she, whom Thou didst choose to be Thy beloved Daughter, pleased Thee and found grace in Thy Sight, so we may learn from her how to fulfil the duties which our condition in life imposes on us.

I. POINT.

Mary found grace with God, in the seclusion of her early life.

Our lives are made up of a daily round of duties, and so was the life of our Lady. During the years which she passed within the precincts of the Temple, she spent her time in the alternate duties of work and prayer, with the other Jewish maidens who were her companions. We can imagine the spirit of obedience and submission with which she must have listened to the instructions and commands

given her ; the gentleness of her manner, the ingenuousness of her character surely won the affection of all with whom she came in contact. No one supposed that she would be called to so high a destiny ; this was a secret known only in Heaven : unconsciously to herself and others, God was preparing her to be the saintly Spouse of the Holy Spirit. So should we pass our lives, with perfect simplicity going from one duty to another, having one thought in view—that of pleasing God. Can there be a better thought ? Can there be a more lofty aspiration ? Our Creator may, or may not have created us to do some apparently great work for Him, but of this we are sure—He desires us all to find grace in His Sight, and places means of doing so in our power, every hour of our lives. We should not rest content with endeavouring to please God from the secondary motive of escaping His anger, nor even of winning the eternal recompence of dwelling in His House for ever, but simply as Mary did, out of pure love and reverence for her All-good, All-wise Creator.

II. POINT.

Mary found yet further grace with God, as the Mother of His Son.

The message sent by God to our Lady increased her humility, and this very spirit of humility was to be further nourished by the many humiliations she would have to share with her Son. Is it in any degree thus with ourselves? When we receive some special favour from God, do we abase ourselves? and become so really, so sincerely conscious of our unworthiness, that we have in consequence, some trial—some humiliation given us as a proof that God can

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trust us to bear it for His Sake? Alongside of the trial there will, in such a case, assuredly be some consolation. He will put under our care perhaps, some virtue to cultivate in ourselves or others, and will bless our endeavours:—or He will give us some definite work to do for Him in the world. How full of sorrows was our Lady's life after the Incarnation; but she had special helps for special trials, and these united to prepare her more perfectly for the close companionship of Jesus, both in suffering and in glory. Thus it is that God deals with His Saints, where He finds willing hearts who trust Him entirely. *He giveth greater grace*, but often through the channel of tribulation.

COLLOQUY.

O God, may I find grace with Thee, by serving Thee in all my actions. Give me Mary's pure intention, her willingness to fill any position in which Thou wouldest place her. If Thou wilt send me any special token of Thy favour, dare I ask that it may be marked with the sign of the Cross? I desire to resemble, in some little degree, the Mother of Thy Son; whom, having found grace with Thee, Thou didst cause to pass through much tribulation, since it is Thy Will that *they who are holy may still be sanctified*, and that by means of affliction. Let each day's duties be done by me in view of pleasing Thee, O God; each day's trials be welcomed.

RESOLUTION.

To be more careful in making the good intention, several times during the day.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Thou art my servant ; I have chosen thee.

PRAYER.

O God, Who by the Immaculate Conception.

Last Week but three before Advent.—Sunday.

The Tempests of the Soul.

Why are you fearful ? have you not faith yet ?—S. MARK IV.

I. PRELUDE.

We see Jesus standing in the ship, rebuking the wind ;
and saying to the sea, *Peace, be still : And there was made a great calm.*

II. PRELUDE.

O Saviour, full of goodness, and Who deignest to be honoured by our confidence, confirm in us this virtue ; so that the most violent storms within may not shake our trust in Thee.

I. POINT.

To be acquainted with the danger is of the first importance, in the midst of our spiritual tempests.

There are certain tempests which put the soul in great danger of being wrecked ; we cannot be too prompt in allaying them, yet we often lose time, because we begin to make efforts in our own strength. Sometimes a passion increases in violence, because we commence to reason about it, instead of combating it. A slight humiliation—a little affront—a small contradiction—and the winds of pride are awakened : the waves of impatience arise in consequence, and the soul is imperiled. If the menacing danger be not perceived in time, its ultimate loss is greatly to be apprehended. Again, of the risk we are running we are perhaps aware : we do not avoid it by having speedy recourse to our Lord, but offend Him by seeking for human succour, and natural consolation, which can never really lull the storms of passion. If they appear to do so for a while, it is but to cause them to break forth with greater fury. Perhaps to punish us for our infidelities, or to try our faith, Jesus seems to sleep ; let us but redouble our cries : *Lord save us, we perish*—as did the Apostles, when Jesus was asleep in the hinder part of the ship. O Saviour, let us never forget that in Thy apparent sleep, *Thy Heart watcheth*. When we are tempest-tossed, let not our hearts sleep, but have recourse to Thee—instantly, yet patiently—confidently, yet humbly.

II. POINT.

In times of spiritual tempest we must remain in the ship with Jesus.

Why are you fearful ? Where Jesus is, there is perfect safety ; at His Side none can perish. When clouds of distrust gather together in the imagination, when the storms of passion begin to assail the heart, let us take refuge near

to Him; so shall we pass securely over the raging billows, *and be brought to the haven which we wish for*; for Jesus will arise and rebuke the tempest, whether it be in the imagination, heart, or soul; and there *shall come a great calm*. His power over nature is absolute: let it be so over us. *What manner of Man is this? for the winds and the sea obey Him.* What wonder, for He is their Creator! *We cried unto the Lord in our affliction, and He brought us out of our distresses.* *He turned the storm into a breeze, and its waves were still:* and we rejoiced. Can this give rise to incredulous astonishment? Is He not our Father?

COLLOQUY.

O my Adorable Master, how often have I proved myself to be wanting in faith. Instead of going at once to Thee to seek peace of mind and tranquillity of soul, I have given way to needless fear and hasty alarm. But henceforth I intend to call upon Thee for help, when the storms of trial and temptation arise: knowing that it does indeed *concern Thee that I perish not*, and that Thou wilt hear my prayer.

RESOLUTION.

To keep near to Jesus, in order to avoid every sort of danger.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Peace, be still: and there was made a great calm.

PRAYER.

Our Father, and Hail Mary.

Last Week but three before Advent.—Monday.

The Will of God was the nourishment of Jesus.

In the meantime the Disciples prayed Him, saying: Rabbi, eat: But He saith to them: I have meat to eat which you know not: My meat is to do the Will of Him that sent Me, that I may perfect His work.—S. JOHN IV.

I. PRELUDE.

We see Jesus resting still by Jacob's well, when the Disciples returned from Sichar, where they had been to buy food.

II. PRELUDE.

O Adorable Son of God, reveal to us the secret of that loving obedience which was Thy nourishment, and which should also be ours, since we ought to imitate Thee in all things.

I. POINT.

The Will of God the Father was the sustenance of God the Son.

My meat is to do the Will of Him that sent Me, that I may perfect His work. Jesus having come from Heaven to accomplish His Father's Will, consecrates Himself to this noble function with so much love, that He becomes wholly absorbed in it, and forgets to take the nourishment ordinarily necessary to support life. In the Temple, He had already

declared : *I must be about My Father's business.* To-day He goes still further, assuring His Disciples (when they persuaded Him to repair His exhausted strength, after His fatiguing journey and the labours of His ministry) that in fulfilling His Father's Will, He found His powers renewed. Thus does He teach us that in working for our own sanctification, or that of others, we should, through the accomplishment of God's designs, find strength and courage to support us in all that we have to do. To perform the good pleasure of our Heavenly Father should be our meat and drink. Has this sentiment, spoken from out the depths of the Heart of Jesus, passed into our own? have divine love and zeal for souls the mastery over our self-love? does God's Will sustain us in our warfare against all that obstructs the path to perfection.

II. POINT.

This spiritual nourishment is so little relished, even by those who ought to depend on it entirely.

How rare it is to find real imitators of our Divine Master, even amongst such as know full well that obedience essentially constitutes the religious life. Many indeed like to do the Will of God, when it is not contrary to theirs, or does not impose on them sacrifices too painful to nature; but this is far from being a sure sign that they have for the Divine Will a special preference to their own. They choose, on the contrary, to do that which flatters self-love and satisfies their desires and inclinations; and yet if we hope to keep up the life of our soul with any other nourishment than that which supported our Lord, we shall find our strength utterly failing sooner or later. Since Jesus, Who was holiness itself, depended on the Will of His Father, and was obedient to it

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in the smallest particular, during His whole Lifetime, should not we, who are so weak, so unreliable, seek to derive all our force from it? and make it the motive of our every action?

COLLOQUY.

I adore Thee, O Most Obedient Son of Mary! and I thank Thee for the sublime lesson afforded me by the respect and love Thou didst manifest for the Will of Thy Heavenly Father. Grant me grace to love His Will, and to prefer it before all selfish considerations. And should it even subject me to painful trials, may I accomplish it courageously, and like Thee, glorify God by my dependence on Him.

RESOLUTION.

To do all my actions in the intention of accomplishing the Will of God.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

My meat is to do the Will of My Father.

PRAYER.

Take, O Lord, and receive.

Last Week but three before Advent.—Tuesday.

The value of a good thought.

Thy thoughts shall be directed.—PROVERBS XVI.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us imagine the effect the words of Jesus had on the woman of Samaria, and how they inspired her with good thoughts.

II. PRELUDE.

Give us, O Lord, the spirit of attention to the holy thoughts inspired by Thy words and Thy example, and may we act upon them, so that we lose not their grace.

I. POINT.

How highly we should value holy thoughts.

To estimate fully the excellence of a good thought, we must be convinced that it is sent from God : it is a present coming from His beneficence, and which surpasses all the powers of human intellectual resources. The heart of man is like a sea, over which the winds pass, from various quarters. The spirit of the world—of the evil one—and of the flesh, blow across it ; and cause vain, sensual or malicious thoughts to arise on its surface. The Spirit of God alone, by the favouring breeze of His inspirations, can conduct us into the port of eternal blessedness. It is the Holy Spirit Who is the Author of those movements towards good, which we feel at a time, perhaps, when we least expect it :—they are a divine favour. When the Samaritan woman left Sichar on her errand—to draw water, she was thinking neither of her salvation, nor of the happiness awaiting her ; but her God was thinking of her, her meeting with the Saviour was not by chance. Thus also when some circumstance awakens an idea in our minds, which may have a good tendency,—when the example of those more pious,

more modest, more virtuous than ourselves, arouses a desire to imitate them,—when our heart is touched by an exhortation—a warning, God is thinking of us, our Saviour is waiting for us, and His Holy Spirit offers us the gift of a good thought; to draw us on to greater fidelity—to greater perfection. Who can tell the results, the eternal results, of one holy thought?

II. POINT.

What God's designs are in giving us holy thoughts.

The Son of God, in coming into the world, willed to sanctify His elect, and through them to procure the greater glory of His Father. To execute a project so worthy of His wisdom, He employs good thoughts to enlighten our understanding and to excite our will. These good thoughts fill our hearts with feelings of admiration, of love, and of gratitude towards our Lord. They discover to us where we are in the wrong, and the means to be taken to free ourselves from our evil passions. God sends holy thoughts to our aid when evil thoughts arise, so that they may displace them; and, filling the mind, leave no room for the suggestions of the spirit of darkness—the spirit of the world—or the spirit of self—of nature. How much should we esteem even a single good thought! such thoughts come not from ourselves, we could not form one. What can we do but own our dependence on the mercy of God, and by making good use of His holy inspirations, open the way for others, which He will send us undoubtedly, and in large measure, thereby to sanctify our hearts and minds more and more.

COLLOQUY.

O God, Thou dost fill the minds of Thy children with

good thoughts, and their hearts with holy sentiments. Understanding their value and blessed effects, may I learn to appreciate them better, and never reject one; for I know not what loss I may thereby bring upon myself, by such indifference. I beseech Thee not to leave me to my own thoughts and imaginations, but visit me with Thy loving inspirations, and by them teach me what I ought to do.

RESOLUTION.

Thankfully to receive the good thoughts which come to me, and to respond most joyfully to all holy suggestions.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth.

PRAYER.

Soul of Christ.

Last Week but three before Advent.—Wednesday.

Guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit breatheth where He will; and Thou hearest His Voice, but thou knowest not whence He cometh, or whither He goeth.—As Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in Him, may not perish, but may have life everlasting.—S. JOHN III.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves that scene in our Lord's Life, where Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, comes into His Presence ; and receives his instructions with respectful attention.

II. PRELUDE.

Grant, O Lord, that we may ever be obedient to the Voice of the Holy Spirit ; so that we may merit to enjoy the precious advantages of a truly spiritual life.

I. POINT.

It is the Holy Ghost Who causes us to advance in the spiritual life.

After having revealed to Nicodemus the mystery of the new life received in Baptism, our Divine Lord continues His instruction, and unfolds further secrets of the spiritual life. We may listen also to these heavenly lessons, which are particularly addressed to those who are called to a higher degree of perfection. *The Spirit breatheth where He will; and thou hearest His Voice; but thou knowest not whence He cometh, or whither He goeth.* The Voice of the Spirit speaks the divine language of holy inspiration, and of the attractions of grace. It cannot make itself heard in restless souls, nor by those who seldom or never look within ; nor occupy themselves with the Divine Guest. He seeks a heart which is recollected, attentive, and desirous of knowing the good pleasure of God. . . . *Thou knowest not whence He cometh.* Often this Voice is recognised after a fervent communion—a pious reading—an instruction attentively

heard—a meditation well made: then at other times His visit is quite sudden—unforeseen. It may be in the form of a striking example—an edifying word, which awaken in us holy thoughts, and as with a flash of light illuminate our understanding. *Thou knowest not whither He goeth.* An inspiration, faithfully followed, often opens the door to a sequence of graces, which render progress in goodness both easy and rapid. How watchful should we be over ourselves, how recollected, how attentive to the movements of the Holy Spirit! How prompt to correspond to them also! for the moments of His special visits are most precious, but often of short duration.

II. POINT.

Jesus proceeds to speak to Nicodemus of the end for which He Himself came into the world.

After having spoken of the office of the Holy Spirit and the necessity of Baptism, our Lord alludes to His own Mission, and His Death upon the Tree. From the stream of grace imparted to us by the operation of the Holy Ghost in our souls, He leads the mind of His Disciple up to its Source—the Cross:—on it He is to be lifted up, so that all men being drawn to Him, and *believing in Him, may not perish, but have everlasting life.* Let us place ourselves at His Feet, as He continues His instruction, and meditate upon the way in which, after the children of Israel in the desert had offended God by their ingratitude they were saved from the punishment of death, in looking at the brazen serpent which Moses set up for a sign: a figure of Jesus Crucified.—When we are suffering from the wounds inflicted by sin, from the effects of the corruption of nature, do we look up to the Cross, with faith in the merits of the

Passion and Death of Him Who hung upon it, in the desert of this world? The redemption of mankind, by God the Son, and his sanctification by God the Holy Ghost, were the mysteries revealed to Nicodemus, who came to Jesus by night. He made known to him that *light had come into the world* in Himself; and that it would be perpetuated by the Spirit of Truth, Who should enlighten the Church, and guide Her into all truth.

COLLOQUY.

I thank Thee, O God, that in Holy Baptism, I have been born again of water and of the Holy Ghost: may He enlighten me by His grace and guide me by His inspirations, and teach me all truth. I thank Thee that Thou, O Father, didst send Thy Only-Begotten Son into the world; may I keep near His Cross, and looking continually up to Him, be saved from the punishment I deserve, being cleansed from my sins in His most Precious Blood.

RESOLUTION.

To be faithful to good inspirations, out of love and gratitude towards God.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

The Spirit breatheth where He will, and thou hearest His Voice.

PRAYER.

Our Father, and Hail Mary.

Last Week but three before Advent.—Thursday.

We are enlightened by means of the Blessed Sacrament.

*Light is risen to the just, and joy to the right of heart.—
PSALM XCVI.*

I. PRELUDE.

Let us contemplate Jesus Christ in the Coenaculum,
instituting the Divine Eucharist.

II. PRELUDE.

O Jesus, Fountain of all light, and consolation ! communicate, we beseech Thee, these Eucharistic gifts to us, as we unite ourselves to Thee in the Sacrament of Thy Love.

I. POINT.

The Holy Eucharist is the Source of Light.

Jesus Christ, during His mortal Life, was the Light of the world. He instructed the ignorant, gave sight to the blind, enlightened the darkened understandings of His disciples ; showed to sinners the way of salvation. In the august Mystery of the Eucharist, none of the sublime characteristics which then distinguished our Lord are lost ; but we now especially meditate on His power of enlightening and consoling. It has been aptly said, that in the Blessed

Sacrament, our Lord is essentially the Sun of Justice, the true Light which enlighteneth *every man that cometh into this world*. In presence of the Adorable Sacrament, some saints have been permitted to comprehend, in a marvellous degree, by the aid of Its supernatural power of illuminating the soul, the greatness of God, the perfection of His attributes, the designs of His Providence in regard to the Church at large, or to individual members of it. And who can rightly speak of the wondrous beauty of those visions, wherein it has been given to some, to penetrate the Eucharistic Veils, and behold Jesus Christ encompassed by the Angels of the Blessed Sacrament! There have been undoubtedly such extraordinary favours, such miraculous facts; and they presuppose lesser manifestations of divine light to less privileged souls. Yes! it is before the Tabernacle that sinners, having a good will, see more clearly the hatefulness of sin, and become more thoroughly converted: while the just discover more perfectly the charms of virtue, and become yet more holy. At the foot of the Altar the true value of the soul is realised with increased distinctness; the illusions of the world fade away; the obscurity caused by the presence of evil passions, is dispelled—as they have been; the clouds of difficulty and of sorrow which have surrounded the past, are scattered before the bright rays which stream in upon our hearts and minds, from the Light of lights That dwelleth there.

II. POINT.

The grace of consolation, of which the Holy Eucharist is the Source.

Jesus Christ in the Eucharist is, to those who adore Him

EIGHTEENTH OF FEBRUARY.

Eighteenth of February.

The World is slow to recognise Jesus.

John said : I saw the Spirit coming down as a dove from Heaven, and he remained upon Him : And I saw and I gave testimony, that this is the Son of God.—S. JOHN i.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves Saint John-the-Baptist, proclaiming before incredulous interrogators that *One had stood in the midst of them Whom they knew not*, and that He was the Son of God.

II. PRELUDE.

Deign, O Lord, to manifest Thyself unto us, enkindle Thy love in our hearts, and increase our knowledge of Thee, so that we may enjoy a sense of Thy Presence in our midst.

I. POINT.

Jesus is so often unrecognised.

There stood One in the midst of you Whom you knew not. He, of Whom Saint John-the-Baptist here speaks is the Eternal Word, the Light which came down from Heaven, to enlighten the world, and to shew mankind the way up to

EIGHTEENTH OF FEBRUARY.

Heaven. Attention was attracted to Him by His saintly Precursor. The curiosity of many of the Jewish people was awakened, but as the Lowly Nazarene was in no way identical with their preconceived idea of the Messias, they failed to understand the declaration of John : *That He was truly the Lamb of God, Who should take away the sins of the world.* Jesus stood in the midst of them and they knew Him not, *for the heart of this people had become gross, with their ears they heard heavily, and their eyes they shut* : they preferred darkness to light. . . . We here see the sad effect of resistance to grace : and, alas ! is not this case of Jewish incredulity and obstinacy often repeated amongst Christians in this our day ? Many live in culpable ignorance of Jesus, Who is in the midst of them in His Church continually, and yet they know Him not. He is ever ready to be the Guest of faithful souls, and to converse with them—to teach them—to heal them—to do them good ; and yet they turn their backs on Him, treat Him with disdain, refuse His offers of help : they deliberately prefer to have nothing to do with Him—their Creator—their Saviour and their Judge. Knowing that our Dear Lord is thus neglected, even by multitudes who are called by His Name, let us prove that we having *found the Messias*, desire above all things to know Him better, and love Him with truer fidelity.

II. POINT.

We must bear testimony that Jesus is the Son of God.

Saint John-the-Baptist fearlessly bore testimony to the Divinity of the Son of Mary, notwithstanding all the objections that were raised on this subject. And we must follow His example of defying human respect, and unflinchingly

EIGHTEENTH OF FEBRUARY.

proclaim by our words and actions that He Whom we serve is the Incarnate Son of God. Is not the Master often put to shame by those who profess to form a part of His retinue? Do not such do injury to His cause? and bring discredit upon Him by their laxity in His service? Would not the world at large entertain a far higher regard for our Lord, did it see that His followers acted as if they belonged to the number of retainers of the King of kings? What if He be less honoured, since we put on His livery? Is the badge of the Cross disrespected because we apparently have thrown it aside? The enemies of the God-Man *are not unfrequently they of His own household*. They grow tired of the condition of abjection in which each true servant of Jesus must pass the short time of this life here: they become ashamed of the garb of humility in which they are required by Him to appear, though only for a little while. What kind of testimony are we giving to the truth that we have for our Master the Son of God? Is it steady? undeniable? edifying? *Are we so confessing Jesus* (as did His faithful servant Saint John-the-Baptist) *before men, that He will confess us* one day, in sight of all the world, *before His Father, Who is in Heaven?*

COLLOQUY.

O my Saviour, having had Thee pointed out to me as *the Lamb of God, Who taketh away the sins of the world*, can it be that I have ever failed to recognise Thy Presence through negligence or cowardice? Help me henceforth to be a more faithful witness of Thy Divinity, and bear testimony by my daily life, to the fact that I glory only in being the humble follower of Jesus of Nazareth. May I do all in my power

EIGHTEENTH OF FEBRUARY.

to cause Thee, my Master, to be honoured and revered; and by my manner of doing Thee service, attract others to the knowledge and love of Thyself.

RESOLUTION.

To be a confessor on my Master's behalf.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Jesus Christ yesterday, to-day, and the Same for ever

PRAYER.

Take, O Lord, and receive.

therein in spirit and in truth, a Friend, a Comforter. After having proved that He has loved us more than His Own Life, after *having borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows*, it would seem impossible for Him to be in the midst of us, without compassionating our misery and weakness; and offering relief to those who suffer grief. A pious soul therefore turns rather towards the Tabernacle for consolation, than towards creatures; however sympathising these may be, they cannot lift off the weight of trial as Jesus can: our confidence in Him cannot be deceived; by Him our tears are never disdained. Has it become natural to us to turn at once to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, when in need of help? of solace? There is the panacea for every ill—for every wound: we are convinced of this, and yet we avail ourselves of it, perhaps only sometimes. Happy are we if we can look back to many blessed hours of spiritual communion with our Lord in His Sanctuary, when we have spoken to Him as *a man is wont to speak to his friend*. It behoves us often to pray, that as we have gone to Him there during our life, to seek for consolation and for strength, so in our death-hour He may deign to visit us, and fortify us for our last journey—that journey to another Country—so solitary, so full of danger, unless Jesus accompany us. How frequently has the Holy Viaticum revived faith, and hope, and love in the dying; causing confidence to overcome despair, impatience to be succeeded by resignation, and murmuring to give place to words of thankfulness and praise. As in the midst of this transitory life, we are in death, so in the midst of death we find Him, Who is the unending Life, graciously communicating Himself to us—just when the fulfilment of His promise is about to be realised: *I am the Living Bread which came down from Heaven: he that eateth this Bread shall live for ever.*

COLLOQUY.

O Jesus, I do not deserve to be visited and consoled by Thee, because I have so often forgotten Thy sacramental Presence—so often grieved Thee by my unfaithfulness to sacramental grace. Yet I may truly say *Thou art my light and my salvation*; and *one thing I ask of Thee, that I may dwell in the House of the Lord all the days of my life: that I may see the delight of the Lord, and visit His Temple*. Feed me with the Bread of Angels, O most Loving Jesus, that I may be one with Thee; and in my last hour come and be my safeguard, *as I pass through the midst of the shadow of death* to the realities of the life of the world to come.

RESOLUTION.

Often to think of Jesus dwelling in the holy Tabernacles of His Church, and of my happiness in being able to visit Him there.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

In Thy light shall we see light.

PRAYER.

Soul of Christ.

Last Week but three before Advent.—Friday.

Our Friendship with Jesus.

The good counsels of a friend are sweet to the soul.—
PROV. XXVII.

I. PRELUDE.

We may withdraw in spirit, into the Coenaculum with Jesus and His Apostles, and hear Him say to us, as well as to them : *I will not now call you servants, but friends.*

II. PRELUDE.

Give us grace, O Lord Jesus, to become worthy of being called Thy friends ; and to make reparation for those who range themselves amongst Thine enemies, and still despise the love of Thy Sacred Heart.

I. POINT.

Jesus is willing to be the True Friend of all men, but the greater number refuse to accept His friendship.

I will not now call you servants : but I have called you friends. It is God who pronounces these words, and it is to us that He addresses them. This single thought ought to melt our hearts with gratitude. Jesus desires to be our Friend ; that we seek to be admitted into His special confidence, and that we speak with Him familiarly of all that

concerns and interests us. He knows our unworthiness, but this proves no obstacle. He forgets, as it were, His majesty and greatness, and remembers only the unchangeable purposes of His love. We are in the company of His disciples—amongst His chosen friends—and Jesus desires to retain us as such. Let us remain then apart from the world, safe in the Upper-Room of retirement and nearness to our Blessed Lord. If we are His true friends, we shall enter into the sorrows of His Sacred Heart as we recollect that He has many enemies. *Whosoever will be the friend of the world, becometh the enemy of God*, and, alas ! the friends of the world are far more numerous than the friends of Jesus. What has He ever done to excite enmity ? *Have they not hated Him without a cause ?* How is it possible that any can deliberately choose to take part against Him—their Benefactor ? And yet this fact remains—our Dear Lord has, comparatively speaking, very few friends. How much then these few have to do ! to maintain His honour—to make reparation for the injuries done to the love of His Sacred Heart—to let their endeavours to promote His glory be in proportion to the endeavours of the friends of the world to deprive Him of it. Do we, as the friends of Jesus, rightly consider our privileges—our advantages, both present and future—and then our responsibilities ?

II. POINT.

The faithful friends of Jesus console His Divine Heart.

The goodness of Jesus, and the title of Friend, with which He has deigned to honour us, both impose equally on us the sacred obligation of consoling His Heart, for the culpable insensibility of those who will neither love Him, nor even

know Him. He calls us into His Presence, He holds frequent intercourse with us, He reveals to us the secrets of His love; and bestows on us numberless favours, which are actually refused by those who care not for His Friendship. He asks that we should compassionate His sorrows, and thanks us if we practically shew our appreciation of His unbounded goodness. The predominant desire of the Sacred Heart is, that all may be saved—that each enemy may be converted into a friend; and it is for those who already possess His Friendship to bring about the realisation of that desire. Filled with holy zeal for the interests of Jesus, we should leave nothing undone to win for Him the love He so perseveringly solicits ; to the outrages offered to Him, His Heart is less sensible, than to the certainty of the eternal loss of many who have been called. *He that loveth not, knoweth not God.* This explains what form our zeal should take—lays down a plan which our devotedness should work out. It is a truer knowledge of God that is wanted, a clearer perception of His charity. To increase this knowledge, to awaken souls to a sense of His infinite love, is the best consolation we can offer to the Sacred Heart.

COLLOQUY.

O my Jesus, Thou hast deigned to call me Thy Friend, notwithstanding my great unworthiness of this high privilege. *Thou hast loved me:* having thus secured my love, do Thou make it ever more responsive to Thine own. May all that still remains in my heart of tepidity or ingratitude disappear; as I become more engrossed in the interests of Thy Sacred Heart. Give me deeper sentiments of generosity, and devotedness : may I not only seek to repair the wrongs com-

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mitted against It, but by my zeal in Its behalf, gain many to share in Thy Friendship.

RESOLUTION.

To make acts of love in the intention of consoling the Divine Heart of Jesus.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

But I have called you my friend.

PRAYER.

O Jesus, living in Mary.

Last Week but three before Advent.—Saturday.

Mary protects her children against temptations.

And the Lord God said to the serpent : She shall crush thy head. . . . And the dragon was angry with the woman.—GENESIS III. ; APOC. XII.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent Mary as charged by God to crush the head of the infernal serpent.

II. PRELUDE.

O Mary, most powerful, we pray thee to help us to triumph against the machinations of the devil and his angels.

I. POINT.

Mary protects us from the assaults of the devil.

The Evangelist, when recounting the temptations with which the devil assailed our Lord, thus finishes this episode in His history : *Then the devil left Him.* The same may be said each time the devil may have sought to surprise into a defeat a true soldier of Jesus Christ : he leaves him. And why ? because the evil one dreads the outcome of an open hand-to-hand combat, with one that fights for the honour of Him Who may justly be called the Divine Example of all heroic virtue, knowing it will end for him in a humiliating overthrow. The devil is a great coward. After a few attempts to wound a saintly adversary, he quits the field, at least for a time : the angels, of whom Mary is the Queen, are seen approaching ; and Lucifer forgets not their onslaught in her cause, when he refused to accept the truth, that *she should bring forth the King, Who reigns over Heaven and earth for evermore.* If we trace out the thought that Mary was the woman chosen by God, from all eternity, to crush the head of the serpent, what doubt can be left in our minds as to her still being the protector of all who call her Mother; a defence against the attacks of her foe and ours. God has, as it were, laid this charge of succouring us upon her. And besides exerting her protecting influence directly in our behalf, she can also obtain for us, those solid virtues which blunt the edge of Satan's weapons. She knows that the more closely we resemble our Incarnate Lord, the more the devil hates us, and the more subtly he plans his attacks. He observes our growing likeness to Jesus, and his enmity increases ; but our holy Mother is observing it also, and her loving care for us, and power with

God, are called forth by our identifying ourselves in the hour of temptation with her Divine Son. We ought indeed to be continually warring with the powers of evil, and that without alarm ; for in the “Tower of David” we find an armoury, from which we can take at any moment, the weapon most suited to our need.

II. POINT.

Mary assists, by means of the Angels, those especially who are consecrated to God.

The Virgin-Queen of the Angels deputes them to guard from evil those especially, who would lead an angelic life in accordance with their consecration-vow of chastity. If we have been called to this state of life, it is the Blessed Virgin who has obtained this privilege for us ; and to enable us to preserve it inviolate, she directs the ministering spirits of good to succour us, when exposed to the spiteful assaults of him who has wicked legions at his bidding, seeking to wound and destroy our souls. God deigns to permit His Angels to ward off dangers, to pray for us, to withdraw us from the power of Satan, to incline us to good, to bring us holy inspirations, to console us in time of tribulation ; but let us remember that He loves to give into the hands of Mary power to dispense His favours, and to send His gifts to such as invoke her assistance. How quickly should her name rise to our lips, when we are in need of help ; in all our temptations how confidently should we have recourse to her, who has such forces at her command ! The celestial battalions are invincible : it is our own fault if we are overcome through want of humility, without which we delude ourselves into the idea that we need not be dependent on

the good offices of the Angels and Saints. Let us not rush single-handed into the fight, but remember that there is safety in a multitude; that we have but to ask, and we shall find there are more for us, than those that are against us.

COLLOQUY.

O Mary ! well art thou styled the “Terror of hell,” and likened to an “Army set in battle-array”. When Thy Divine Son was tempted by the devil, He—as Man—availed Himself of the promise that the Angels of God should be sent to the assistance of those who needed their care. Now that thou art crowned their Queen, obtain for me from God, that I may be accounted worthy to be succoured by them ; and set them as a guard around me, when I am in danger of falling into the hands of the angels of the arch-enemy. I know that thou wilt not betray the confidence I place in thee, O Blessed Virgin ; and that I may always rely on thy personally interesting thyself on my behalf, whenever I invoke thy aid.

RESOLUTION.

To have recourse to Mary, with confidence and humility, in times of temptation.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Help of Christians ! pray for me.

PRAYER.

We fly to thy Patronage.

Last Week but two before Advent.—Sunday.

The Parable of the Wheat and the Cockle.

The kingdom of Heaven is likened to a man that sowed good seed in his field. But while men were asleep, his enemy came and oversowed cockle among the wheat, and went his way: And when the blade was sprung up, and had brought forth fruit, then appeared also the cockle: And the servants of the goodman of the house coming, said to him: Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? whence then hath it cockle? And he said to them: An enemy hath done this.—S. MATT. XIII.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves a vast plain, in the middle of which Jesus addresses the assembled people.

II. PRELUDE.

Teach us, O Lord, to adore Thy judgments, and to fear them; and grant that by faithfulness in serving Thee, we may merit to be received into the Kingdom of eternal recompense.

I. POINT.

During this life the wicked are side by side with the good.

Our Lord Himself expounded to the Apostles this parable: *He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man: The field is the world: the good seed are the children of the Kingdom: the cockle are the children of the wicked one: And*

the enemy that sowed them is the devil. These, who own this enemy for their master, occupy the same field as those who are the true servants of the Goodman of the house. The good, whom God has placed in the world that they may ripen unto the eternal Kingdom, by the practice of virtue, are constantly harassed and persecuted by the bad; so that they are often tempted to ask why God delays to exterminate them from the face of the earth. Thus we hear the servants in the parable saying, when they saw the cockle growing together with the good seed: *Sir, wilt thou that we go and gather it up?* Let us listen to the wise answer given by the good Master: *No, lest perhaps, gathering up the cockle, you root up the wheat also, together with it. Suffer both to grow until the harvest.* If God took the wicked out of the world, He would deprive the just of the means of acquiring the highest merits, which they now gain, through the exercise of true patience and fidelity,—and moreover, is it not possible that the wicked may themselves be converted and become good wheat? a precious crop, of which premature severity might deprive the Owner of the field. We bless Thee, O God, with our whole heart for Thy great wisdom, and infinite goodness; for hast Thou not borne with us—waited for us—when we might have been reckoned amongst Thine enemies? We beseech of Thee to extend a like patience and mercy towards those who offend Thee, and for whom we are bound to pray; so that, vanquished by the power of Thy grace, and Thy Fatherly goodness, they may live and grow in Thee, and be saved.

II. POINT.

The separation of the bad from the good will take place at the end of the world.

In the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers : Gather up first the cockle, and bind it in bundles to burn : but the wheat gather ye into my barn. When the moment, fixed by God for the destruction of the world, shall have arrived, all mankind must appear before His Tribunal ; and then will be made the great separation between the wicked and the just. Let us observe the order in which our Lord speaks of these two classes. First of the wicked : *I will say to the Reapers* : that is, the Angels, *Gather up first the cockle* : He utters the condemnation of the rebellious without delay ; as if He would pass rapidly over a loss so painful to Him, Who once died to save them all ; it must be done : their evil deeds, perhaps one mortal sin, have never been repented of ; therefore they cannot be garnered with the good wheat. *Bind the cockle into bundles to burn* : they will be bound by the links of those sins, and the bonds of those iniquities, which they have committed ; and *thus cast into the pool burning with fire and brimstone, which is the second death*. But, adds our Saviour, *gather ye the wheat into My barn* ; grain by grain, each carefully set in the place appointed by Him, Who knows His own, from the greatest of His saints, to the least of His brethren ; and as if lovingly dwelling on this subject, so dear to His Heart, He continues : *The just shall then shine as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father.*

COLLOQUY.

Give me, O my God, to understand these things, impress upon me a wholesome fear of Thy judgments ; but at the same time fill me with an unalterable trust in Thy mercy ; and grant, that abandoning myself to the guidance of Thy Providence, I may merit, at the Last Day, to be gathered by

the Angels, as good and pure wheat, fit for the heavenly Garner.

RESOLUTION.

To bear with patience, as God does, the growing together of the good and the bad, praying that those may persevere, and these be converted.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

God our Saviour will have all men to be saved.

PRAYER.

Our Father, and Hail Mary.

Last Week but two before Advent.—Monday.

God demands our love in return for His own.

I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore have I drawn thee, taking pity on thee.—JER. XXXI.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves how God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, are now looking down upon us with feelings of affection ; and how the Saints, in all ages, have reciprocated this love as far as they have been able.

II. PRELUDE.

Grant, O Holy Trinity, that knowing the innumerable claims Thou hast to our love, we may yield it all gladly to Thee.

I. POINT.

All that we have—all that we are, we owe to the Three Divine Persons of the Blessed Trinity.

The Creator, the Saviour, the Paraclete, One God! They form the Object of our adoration and love. The Name of Father, as it regards us, is a Name of purest affection, and shews how much He, Who created us, loves us. In whatever way we look at this divine Fatherhood, it is love which meets our view. Love actuated Him in giving us life: by love His Providence preserves and guides us: in predestinating, justifying, and hereafter glorifying us *who are called to be saints*, is it not by love that He accomplishes His purposes? What love can equal His, since *it moved Him to send His Son into the world to be the propitiation for our sins*? Has He not a true claim to all the affection of our heart? Whom should we love, if we love not our Heavenly Father? . . . And God, the Son, gives us no less proof of His charity. We have seen Him descend from His Home of glory, and abase Himself by taking upon Him our human nature, in order to live in poverty—to suffer—and to die in the midst of ignominy and cruel torments! So incomprehensible a charity demands in return all the love which we are capable of giving. . . . And the Holy Spirit is that Spirit of Love which proceeds from the Father and the Son; and inspires us with charity towards God, and towards our neighbour—*shedding it abroad in our hearts*.

How could we withhold our love from Him, Who Himself infuses this grace into our souls? What then must needs be the conclusion we draw from these considerations? We never can sufficiently love our God as we ought, but we must perseveringly endeavour to do so as much as we can.

II. POINT.

We must be holy, if we would truly love God.

To become worthy of rendering our homage of adoration and love to the Most Holy Trinity, not hereafter in Heaven only, but also now on earth, we must strive to imitate the sanctity of God Himself. *Be ye holy, because I, the Lord your God, am holy*, was the message sent through Moses to the children of Israel by God, the Father; and the Son of God says, in the Gospel: *Be ye therefore perfect, as also your Heavenly Father is perfect*. Holiness of life is the most practical, the most worthy acknowledgment of our reverence for the Most High God,—the best proof of love that we can offer to the Undivided Trinity. In the order of nature and of grace we are under eternal obligations to Each of the Three Divine Persons, we owe everything to Their respective and continual operations in us and for us. Our care should be, not to thwart the designs of the Blessed Trinity in our regard, but to tend unceasingly towards Christian perfection. To glorify the Father, we have but to follow in all things the example of His Beloved Son, Whose Life on earth was one unbroken chain of acts of adoration. The Holy Spirit is glorified by our docility to His inspirations, while He teaches us to glorify the Father and the Son. The unity of will and purpose in the Deity, is the foundation of our hope

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of attaining to holiness here, and everlasting happiness in the world to come.

COLLOQUY.

O Ever-Blessed Trinity ! the three powers of my soul tend towards Thee, in accordance with Thy all-wise intention. May they be strengthened to fulfil Thy purpose, so that the remembrance of Thee may be the chief and happiest record of my memory,—the knowledge of Thee, the guiding light of my understanding,—the love of Thee, the very life of my heart. Sanctify me in my body, soul, and spirit, and thus enable me to offer Thee, O God, such acts of loving allegiance and adoration as may be pleasing to Thy Divine Majesty. Make me to strive after perfection, with this aim in view : to become worthy to offer Thee praise and glory everlasting, in Heaven.

RESOLUTION.

To acknowledge constantly my absolute dependence on the Most Holy Trinity ; to testify my love, and humbly adore.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

O Holy, Undivided Trinity, to Thee be glory for ever and ever.

PRAYER.

Our Father, and Hail Mary.

Last Week but two before Advent.—Tuesday.

Belief in our Lord is an exercise of Faith.

JESUS CHRIST—Whom having not seen, we love—though we see Him not, we believe; and believing shall rejoice with joy unspeakable and glorified.—I. S. PETER I.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us look at our Lord standing amongst His Apostles ; and listen to His declaration in favour of those who believe in Him, without having seen Him.

II. PRELUDE.

O Divine Saviour, deign to increase in us the virtue of Faith, while Thou dost make us to understand its excellence.

I. POINT.

How much Faith pleases our Lord and glorifies Him.

It is faith which has overcome the world ; its weapons have put down the revolts of corrupt nature, and it has thus extended the Kingdom of Jesus Christ in souls. It is the fundamental principle of that zeal which Apostles have displayed in their evangelical labours ; of the constancy of Virgins in the presence of cruel tyrants ; of the courage that still—in these degenerate times—so large a number of the faithful oppose to the strong forces of human passion, and

the wide-spread seductions of bad example. Are we not, each one of us, witnesses to the power of faith over hearts, if we are seeking to please our Lord? *for without faith it is impossible so to do.* God, by means of His gift of faith, renders Himself Master of our understandings and our wills, and thereby much glory accrues to Him. It is our duty to renew within us this virtue, to cultivate it steadily, and to strengthen in ourselves this consideration:—that the more lively our faith is, the more perfect will other virtues become in us. Let us cry out from the depths of our hearts, as did the Apostles when our Lord had once been giving them an instruction on charity: *Increase our faith!* If we have faith in its fulness, we shall also possess true love, *which is the bond of perfection*, in abundance.

II. POINT. .

They are most happy who live by faith.

Blessed are they who have not seen, and have believed. Yes! most blessed are they—they receive in this life the reward of their submissive, yet active belief; for it supplies to them a foretaste of celestial happiness, of which faith is capable of making them anticipate, in some degree, the unchangeableness and reality. The knowledge it affords us of divine things, far surpasses in value all the science acquired by the wise and learned of this world. While it unfolds the beauty of the perfections of the Creator—His gifts—His benefits—His rewards, faith excites in us love for Him. While disengaging our affections from perishable objects, it elevates them to things invisible, and makes known to us the value of the prize of eternal life. When we submit to the holy law of God, faith assures us of its

justice, and enforces the necessity of perseverance in well-doing. Do we habitually see things with the eye of faith? Are we daily participating in the happiness of those who live in the spirit of faith? By it raised above the things of sense, are we hoping for those things *that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard?* and are we learning to love God above all, and our neighbour as ourselves, with a charity supernatural, disinterested, pure, solid, invariable? Faith encourages us in our difficulties. By the clear light of this divine torch may we not mount towards Heaven, and see our everlasting dwelling-place? in this way exciting within ourselves greater ardour in our endeavours to reach it. We shall do well to descend into hell by the same light; and contemplating the torments of the lost, avoid more carefully all that is contrary to a holy life.

COLLOQUY.

How can I sufficiently thank Thee, O Jesus, for having enlightened my soul with the divine light of faith! Its clear rays produce so sweet a radiance, that it forms the solace of my exile, the quiet happiness of my heart, and the joy of my life.—And if already, O Jesus, faith in Thy mysteries and in Thy promises renders me so happy, what will the actual contemplation of Thy glory be? the enjoyment of the riches of the eternal Kingdom? What will be the realisation of my joy, when faith shall have conducted me through this land of exile, to the entrance of *the City that hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God.*

RESOLUTION.

Not to perform my actions by routine, nor through self-will; but to renew frequently in myself the spirit of faith, and so to act with purity of intention.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed.

PRAYER.

Our Father, and Hail Mary.

Last Week but two before Advent.—Wednesday.

Necessity and Power of Prayer.

Every one that asketh, receiveth: and he that seeketh, findeth: and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.—S. MATT. VII.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us take our places amongst the Disciples as they surround the Divine Master, and receive with respect and gratitude the instruction He is giving for the spiritual benefit of us all.

II. PRELUDE.

Grant to us, O God, the spirit of prayer, which draws down upon those who possess it, so many graces.

I. POINT.

Prayer is necessary at all times.

Our Blessed Saviour, when about to leave His beloved children, left to them this legacy: the assurance that prayer would prove an excellent means of providing for all their

wants during His absence from them : *Ask, and you shall receive: that your joy may be full.* Prayer is then necessary. Firstly: to avoid the evils which might happen to us : every day of our lives we meet with occasions of sin, from which divine grace alone can deliver us ; for however determined we may be to live apart from the world—its spirit—its usages, we find the love of all this within our own hearts, or at least striving to make its home there. Secondly : prayer is necessary for us to obtain, at every moment, light and strength ; so that we may accomplish, with fervour, all the obligations of our state in life : our Lord recommends us to pray instantly, in imitation of that poor widow who by her importunity, obliged the unjust judge to do justice in her case. Thirdly : prayer is necessary in order to do each action well. Man is absolutely incapable of working out his own salvation alone—by himself ; God has willed that he should gain each step in sanctity, by the help of His grace. In the ordinary course of His Providence, this help is only given to such as ask for it. From this we see that without prayer we cannot be saved. It is true that early graces, and first holy impressions, may be received without our co-operation ; such as a call to the true faith, or to repentance (as Saint Augustine remarks,) since God sometimes grants these to those who do not pray ; but it is certain that other graces, and above all, the gift of perseverance, are granted only to those who seek them in prayer. We are like mendicants, and can only expect to have those graces which God bestows on us as alms. His promise is, however, unfailing: *Ask, and you shall receive.*

II. POINT.

The power of that prayer which is offered in the Name of Jesus.

Prayer would be practised by us in a much higher degree, if we constantly bore it in mind that when our Lord was about to return to Heaven, to become *our Advocate and Mediator*, He declared that we had only to go to His Father, making use of His Name, and that infallibly our petitions would be favourably received, and answered. As at the beginning of Jesus' Ministry, so at its close, we find Him uttering the same short word of command and encouragement. *Ask—ask.* What more simple? We have a desire in our hearts—ask for its accomplishment: we have a longing so intense, that we feel if it were granted, our cup of happiness would be filled to overflowing—*ask, and you shall receive, and why? that your joy may be full: Whosoever you shall ask the Father in My Name, that will I do: and, if you shall ask Me anything in My Name, that also I will do. And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete.* Why have we so little faith about the power of prayer? is it not true that it moves the Will of God? can it be so very difficult to believe the words of Him Who is Truth itself? Are we too proud to ask for what we want? Let us place our petitions in the Hands of Jesus, and ask Him to offer them for us before the Father's Throne? Then will the Blessed Spirit descend with a favourable reply—a grace—a virtue—a blessing—spiritual attainments. Saints have the courage to ask for a momento of His Cross and Passion—the dearest token of His love. Is this going too far for our weak faith and little love?

COLLOQUY.

Divine Saviour, Thy goodness inclines Thee to place at my disposal Thy riches and Thy graces, and Thou dost recommend me simply to ask for them in Thy Name. I bless

and praise Thee with all my heart, and I pray for grace to make good use of this permission, this means of salvation and sanctification. May I be united to Thee by the golden links of perpetual prayer; make me to understand more clearly my many needs, so that I may depend daily—hourly—for my spiritual and temporal supplies, on the alms I receive from Heaven.

RESOLUTION.

To pray more uninterrupted—not only with my lips, but by my actions.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full.

PRAYER.

Our Father, and Hail Mary.

Last Week but two before Advent.—Thursday.

Holy union with Jesus.

As the Living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth Me, the same also shall live by Me.—S. JOHN VI.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us listen to Jesus saying from the Tabernacle: *He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood, abideth in Me and I in Him.*

II. PRELUDE.

Divine Jesus, help us always to make good and fervent Communions ; so that Thou mayest dwell in us by Thy grace, and we may dwell in Thee, by our love and faithfulness.

I. POINT.

Holy Communion unites us to Jesus Christ.

Our Adorable Saviour, in giving Himself to us by means of Holy Communion, does not come into our hearts as a passer-by : He wills to dwell there, and He does dwell there, if we preserve with care the effects of the Holy Sacrament in our souls. The heart that has received Jesus, and remains united to Him in recollectedness and with fidelity, is a living Tabernacle in which He will abide with loving complacency : He converses sweetly with such a heart and replenishes it with His favours. After Holy Communion we are so closely united to Him, that we actually live with His Life ; it is He Who puts into us those virtues, that we afterwards produce in act ; as the sap in the stem of the tree communicates itself to the branches, causing them to bring forth fruit. *He that abideth in Me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit.* If we do not feel the effects of this wonderful union, it is because of some imperfection in ourselves. “If after Holy Communion,” says Saint Bonaventure, “you do not feel the effect of the spiritual food you have eaten, it is a sign that your soul is sick, or that it is dead. You have put fire into your bosom, and not felt the heat of it ; honey into your mouth and not tasted its sweetness. We know but too well that we are full of evil passions and vices, which are spiritual ailments, destroying our relish

for Holy Communion : they prevent our finding those celestial delights which we should discern, did we rightly dispose ourselves to approach the Table of our Lord. We ought therefore to have frequent recourse to humble, fervent prayer, in order to obtain purity of heart. This will produce in us peace, and tranquillity of soul ; and light also, to discover our errors—blindness—and the depths of our sinfulness : it will help us to observe and to repress the rebellions of nature against grace, and to correct all the disorders of our hearts. The knowledge of ourselves is the effect of purity of heart ; consequently also of humility, which necessarily promotes a longing to depend for life upon that *Living Bread which came down from Heaven.*

II. POINT.

Holy Communion renders us conformable to Jesus Christ.

No earthly alliance can offer a comparison between itself and the celestial union which Jesus deigns to ratify, each time we receive His Precious Body and Blood. Truly He is the Bridegroom of our souls ! With what respect, with what love, with what holy joy ought they not to be filled, at the approach of these sweet moments which strengthen the bonds of that mystic union, that exists between our Lord and each true member of His beloved Church. *I in them :* and thus it is that we, even during this our earthly pilgrimage, know something of that blessed oneness, which is to be the cause of our glory and felicity in Heaven. Jesus now hides Himself within our hearts, never to leave them, if we at least will have it so : He imparts to us in all their comprehensiveness, the results of His Incarnation and His Death. These Mysteries of mercy and love He accom-

plished, to make us conformable to Himself by our union with Him, through partaking in His merits and imitating His virtues. He desires that each one of His children should glorify His Father, as He has Himself glorified Him: and this is why He reproduces Himself, so to speak, in ourselves, in order that we may be those *true adorers, who adore God in spirit and in truth*. Let us not raise any obstacle to the fulfilment of the longings of the Heart of Jesus; but casting aside tepidity, advance in the practice of virtue,—in doing which we shall best show our appreciation of His infinite goodness, in instituting this Sacrament of Love.

COLLOQUY.

O my Saviour, I prostrate myself at Thy Feet, and offer Thee my homage of adoration, love, and gratitude,—all which is indeed justly due to Thee. I deplore the frequent languidness of my aspirations; and I beseech Thee to give me those longing desires for Holy Communion which are so agreeable to Thee, and which prepare my soul to receive Thee more worthily. May I, by these means, grow in conformity to Thyself, so that in my life and conversation I may glorify God.

RESOLUTION.

To combat diligently my predominant fault in order to be better disposed for Holy Communion.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

I in them.

PRAYER.

Soul of Christ.

Last Week but two before Advent.—Friday.

Jesus should be the Sovereign Lord of our hearts.

Behold thy King will come to thee, the Just—the Saviour.
—ZACHARIAS IX.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves Jesus Christ under the circumstances which distinguished His triumph, on the day of His entrance into Jerusalem. We see in Him both gentle dignity, and the majesty of truth.

II. PRELUDE.

O Jesus, Divine King of our hearts, reign Thou in them.

I. POINT.

Jesus is the rightful Monarch over us.

Jesus is our King, we belong to Him, for were we not made by Him? and for Himself? But sin having withdrawn us from the easy yoke of His legitimate authority, He has had to reconquer His lost possession from the power of Satan, at the price of a deadly combat; in which *He laid down His Life, that He might take it again.* This conquest was not necessary to His glory: He being essentially great—holy—perfect—has no need of us, nor of any creature to enhance the splendour of His Majesty; but His Heart inclined Him to make His lost creatures happy; and He,

the Prince of Peace, came amongst men and bestowed true peace on them, by fighting against and overthrowing their enemies. He has dictated to us His law of love, and He wills to reign in our hearts now by His grace, so that one day, we may reign with Him in His glory. Can we refuse to our King the tribute of love which He claims? He offers His Heart as a place of refuge, wherein we may be protected from the attacks of our foe; and at the same time, He discovers to us the treasures hidden there, which we may make our own. Are we carefully observing the law Jesus has laid down for us, His subjects? are we zealous for His glory? devoted to His cause and His interests?

II. POINT.

Jesus desires to reconquer the hearts of all men.

Although our Divine King gave His Life to vanquish the devil and conquer the world, yet the empire of sin is so firmly rooted in the hearts of many, that Jesus cannot yet fully establish His Kingdom.—Still the cry goes forth from the world's votaries: *We will not have this Man to reign over us.* Therefore our Lord, full of pity for the multitudes who are hastening blindly to destruction, calls upon His faithful subjects to gather together beneath His Standard, and form a holy league to war against His enemies, and deliver souls from their grasp. He promises these combatants that He will cover them with the impenetrable buckler of his protection, He arms them with the power of the Cross, and sends them forth to fight with the weapons of prayer—of good example—and of such others as an ingenious zeal may furnish, against the scandals of the world, and the obstinacy of sinners. Do we fear to enter the lists? to engage in so

noble an undertaking? The Heart of Jesus asks of us only good-will, courage, and generosity; we are sure of His help, and we are promised success in proportion to our efforts and our fidelity.

COLLOQUY.

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, make me to love and practise Thy law of love; may I be so devoted to Thy cause, that I may manfully fight against the enemies of those for whom Thou wert pierced by the soldier's lance.—Jesus, come Thou and reign over me, so that in fighting I may be fighting for my King!

RESOLUTION.

To profit by every opportunity for the extension of the knowledge and love of Jesus.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

And the Lord shall be King over all the earth: in that day there shall be One Lord.

PRAYER.

O Loving Jesus.

Last Week but two before Advent.—Saturday.

Mary's special care in conducting the Spouses of her Son to glory.

Be glad and rejoice, for your reward is very great in Heaven.
—S. MATT. V.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us contemplate Mary, looking down in love upon her privileged children.

II. PRELUDE.

O Mary, Queen of Virgins, thou hast given us to Jesus, since we have placed in thy hands the sacred vows which unite us to Him: obtain for us that—faithful to our vocation—we may arrive at the perfection of our holy estate.

I. POINT.

Mary encourages religious souls in the difficulties they encounter.

It is right to wish to attain a high degree of sanctity; but we should understand that there must be a proportionate need of watchfulness, if such desires are to be granted. A soul that has risen to a higher state of perfection, is often more suddenly precipitated into an abyss of misery. The more elevated our position, the more we incur those dangers which may lead to fatal results; our obligations are more extended, our temptations more frequent. Our weakness we know too well; and this is why even an Apostle believed he had cause to fear, lest he should become a castaway. But let us trust in Mary; through her intercession, Jesus will take pleasure in filling our hearts with confidence. His Mother distributes His graces; she has the privilege of being, after the Holy and Undivided Trinity, the chief cause of our glory and our joy; she is the hope of all who turn to her for help; of all who honour her. Can it be difficult to do this? Does she not surpass, in the perfectness of the Beatific Vision, each individual Saint? and not only this, but her merits and her

beauty surpass the combined beauty and merits of them all. Ought we not then, in aiming at that height of perfection to which God has called each of us, to depend on the protection of her whose foot never slipped? And yet she has mounted higher in grace and in glory than any other creature. Our greatest desire should resemble hers; to become more and more holy, that we may the better glorify God:—with this pure intention, we need not fear to fall—but let our humility make us ever watchful.

II. POINT.

After this our exile, Mary will show us our Spouse—Jesus.

As the Church asks in the Salve Regina, that the Virgin Mary *will shew unto us the blessed Fruit of her womb*, we may understand that to her it belongs to present us hereafter to Jesus. After Him, and through Him, she is the salvation of the world; and more particularly of Religious, because between her pure heart and theirs, there exist the dearest and most intimate relations. It must be—how could it be otherwise? her highest delight to pour into chosen souls the fulness of those graces of which she is the Dispenser, since they have renounced the hopes and joys of this world to follow in the train of a God, Who was suffering—poor—and lowly. The greater our generosity, the more will Mary give us to participate in His wonderful virtues—His poverty—His purity—His obedience. She is leading us now, step by step, to the Throne of her Son; so shall we enjoy His Presence eternally with her. Let us be faithful to our vocation, fulfilling its duties with unvarying magnanimity; then, after having experienced during this life, the effects of the maternal protection of Mary, we shall have the happiness of being united in glory with Jesus and with her for ever.

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COLLOQUY.

O Divine Mary—powerful protector of souls devoted to Jesus, thy Adorable Son—thou knowest the dangers I daily incur in consequence of the enmity of the world and the devil. Bless me, and look mercifully upon me, and after the time of my exile, show me the blessed Fruit of thy womb —Jesus.

RESOLUTION.

In all temptations to go to Mary with child-like simplicity.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Behold your Mother.

PRAYER.

We fly to thy Patronage.

Last Week but one before Advent.—Sunday.

Parable of the Leaven.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like to leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened.—S. MATT. XIII.

L. PRELUDE.

We see before us a vast plain, and in the midst of it is Jesus, addressing an assemblage of people.

II. PRELUDE.

Grant to us, O God, grace to understand the great love
Thou dost display towards mankind, by the accomplishment
of those Mysteries which Jesus taught in parables.

I. POINT.

The parable of the leaven is typical of the mysteries of the Incarnation, and of the Redemption.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto leaven, which is that portion of dough, already existing, that is incorporated into the new mass ; and causes the fermentation which is necessary to render the bread wholesome. By this homely illustration our Lord pourtrays to us that Mystery of Love which made Him descend from Heaven ; and incorporate Himself into the human race, that He might raise it up in the likeness of the Divine Image. He united by His Incarnation, His Divinity to our humanity ; and this He did for us—and for our salvation. He leavened the world by His entrance into it : communicating the virtue of His Divine Life to all people who, dwelling therein, become members of that Mystical Body, of which He is the Head. . . . We again see the aptness of the similitude, made use of in this parable, in looking upon our Lord as our Redeemer. He submitted to all sorts of ignominy—He was roughly handled—His Holy Body was bruised and torn: *And we have seen Him, and there was no sightliness.* He was like unto the formless leaven : God disguised Himself, in order to communicate the virtue of His Passion to His Church: *that He might present it to Himself, not having spot nor wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.* Let us

ask Jesus not to allow our minds to reject the instruction He gives in parables, but that they may be to us food for pious reflection; and that He may reveal to us their hidden meaning.

II. POINT.

The parable of the leaven prefigured the Eucharist.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like to leaven; which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal; until the whole was leavened. The Mysteries of the God-made-Man, and of His Passion as the Saviour, surpass without doubt, all that created intelligence might conceive of, or hope from, His goodness. But the loving thoughtfulness of Jesus for His Church would find out another manner of incorporating Himself with Her children. To each of us He would make an especial gift of His merits—of His graces—of Himself, in His Divinity and Humanity, by means of the Holy Eucharist. Through this Mystery He contracts so intimate a union with our souls and our bodies, that we are changed into Him. . . . We may understand the three measures of meal to be the three powers of our souls. Our memory should be filled with the things of God only—the sentiments of our heart and mind should tend upwards towards God—our will should be conformable to God's most holy Will. Such are the good effects which the Eucharist should produce in us; and yet these are not the only fruits of the Adorable Sacrament: deposited within us by means of It, are the germs of Immortality, which survive the dissolution of the body. God's Eye looks upon our bodies in decay, and distinguishes in these remains something supernatural—the impress left upon them by the Sacramental touch—the Eucharistic indwelling of His Beloved Son. At the signal given for the Resur-

rection, these bodies will rise from their tombs, clothed in that glory which will be the vestment of the risen, living members of Jesus Christ. This last effect of the Sacred Leaven of the communicated life of Jesus, is assured to us, who have been partakers of It; and who have been penetrated by the spirit and virtues which this Life imparts.

COLLOQUY.

O Divine Jesus, I adore Thee in Thy Mysteries of Love. May I experience the fruit of them in my own soul; may I understand how unworthy I should be of Thy goodness, were I not to repay it, at least, with gratitude; and render Thee, as far as I can, love for love. May my whole being be leavened by Thy Life, so that I may say with the Apostle: *I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me.*

RESOLUTION.

To think often during this day of the great Mysteries of Love on which I have meditated; and to consecrate anew to Jesus my heart—my mind—my will.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

He that eateth Me, the same also shall live by Me.

PRAYER.

Soul of Christ.

Last Week but one before Advent.—Monday.

Jesus casts out the profaners of the Temple.

Take these things hence, and make not the House of My Father a house of traffic.—S. JOHN II.

I. PRELUDE.

We see before us Jesus, Who embodied in Himself all gentleness and forbearance, driving out those from the Temple who were profaning it.

II. PRELUDE.

Thou wast, O Saviour, so zealous for the glory of Thy Father, that Thou couldst not suffer the violation of the purity of His Temple : inspire us with a like zeal, with regard to Thy material Temples ; and also to preserve the sanctity of our bodies, the living Temples in which Thou dost deign to dwell.

I. POINT.

God makes our heart His Sanctuary.

Our faith concerning the Presence of Jesus in our churches is firm and unchangeable, and we love to offer to our Divine Master, Who willingly dwells in them, our homage of adoration, gratitude, and love. But are we always careful to prove our belief by a reverent behaviour before the Tabernacle, within which Jesus reposes ? The sellers were in the

outer courts only, of the Temple ; and they were selling what would be offered in sacrifice therein ; and yet our Lord shewed more severity in His zeal for His Father's glory, on this occasion than perhaps on any other. Let us bear this in mind, to increase and confirm in ourselves a sense of awe and reverence for the Majesty of God, Who would not have even the surroundings of His Temple used for ordinary purposes. Let us guard our Holy of Holies, not only from profanity, but from the slightest mark of disrespect. Does our faith likewise often remind us that God lives also in us ? in our bodies, and in our souls, which form a Sanctuary for the Divinity. *Know you not that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you ?* says Saint Paul. One should often repeat to one's self : "I am the dwelling-place of God—He is within me—He takes pleasure in being there, and in being intimately united to me." With this thought ever before us, how can we remain cold and indifferent in the Presence of our Divine Guest ? Should it not cause our hearts to rejoice unceasingly ? to turn towards Him with loving attention ? and to fear nothing so much as to lose Him ?

II. POINT.

How zealously we should preserve personal holiness.

The zeal of Thy House hath eaten Me up. If it would grieve us deeply to witness any profanation of the sacred vessels, any irreverences committed in our Churches,—if we are happy to see our Altars adorned with all that is most beautiful, in honour of Him Who dwelleth there, with what carefulness should we not avoid the smallest fault which could tarnish the sanctity of our bodies, those sacred tabernacles which God inhabits ? *Glorify God and bear God in*

your body. With what fervour ought we not to endeavour to embellish these visible temples, and to adorn them with all those virtues, which may render them pleasing to Him? Let us drive away far from us, with the scourge of mortification, all sensuality, vanity, and avarice, the spirit of the world, and all that might profane or violate the abode of the Spirit of God. If we need a powerful motive to incite us to a holy indignation against ourselves, because of our want of care in guarding well the surroundings of this abode, let us hear Jesus saying in a tone of divine authority : *Take these things hence.*

COLLOQUY.

O my God, Thou dost make of me, unworthy as I am, a temple in which Thou wilt dwell. How often should I recall this consoling thought, how much should I rejoice in the assurance that Thy Spirit is within me, and that I am not my own.—May I be more careful to adorn Thy sanctuary with those virtues in which Thou dost take delight, making in my heart a Tabernacle for Thee, out of the pure gold of charity.

RESOLUTION.

To avoid the least faults, because they tarnish the Tabernacle of the Thrice-Holy God.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Know you not that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

PRAYER.

O Jesus, living in Mary.

Last Week but one before Advent.—Tuesday.

On well-ordered Zeal.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you abundantly, in all wisdom: All whatsoever you do in word, or in work, all things do ye in the Name of the Lord, JESUS Christ, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.—COL. III.

I. PRELUDE.

In all we do, let us imagine that Jesus is personally directing our work.

II. PRELUDE.

Grant, O Good Master, that in listening to Thy divine instructions, we may learn how to direct our zeal, for Thy honour and glory.

I. POINT.

Jesus—the Wisdom of the Father—instructs mankind. With what attention should we receive His teaching !

What is man that Thou art mindful of him ? Do we understand the dignity of having the Son of God for our Master ? the Infinite Wisdom for our Preceptor ? The Eternal Light has come in person to dispel the darkness of our ignorance, to make us know our divine origin, our sublime destinies, and the way which leads to sovereign happiness. The mercy of God, and the dignity of the soul of man, appear side by side, as we contemplate the Incarnate

Wisdom going into the towns and villages of Judea—undertaking these journeys at the cost of so much labour—to teach the way of salvation. Wishing to renovate mankind, to form a holy people for Himself, He preached a heavenly doctrine, which gathered up into itself the old Law and the grand precept of Love; thus comprehending all true religion, with its worship, its maxims, its virtues. The zeal of Jesus Christ during His public Ministry, shows us the importance of His mission of proclaiming the good tidings of salvation: it would doubtless have carried Him beyond the limits of the Holy Land, had not the Will of the Heavenly Father detained Him there. *I am come to cast fire on the earth, and what will I but that it be kindled?* How ungrateful are we if we do not feel a lively sense of thankfulness and love towards a Master so good, so generous, so devoted? What if we are depriving our Saviour of the fruits of His labours? and our souls of the precious benefits He has procured for them?

II. POINT.

We must allow ourselves to be guided according to the doctrine and spirit of our Master.

The doctrine of Jesus Christ contains principally four things that we should adopt—in theory and practice. We must have the same sentiments as He; the same affections; the same principle of action; and exercise ourselves in the same virtues: thus must be formed the chief characteristics of the true disciples of our Lord. To have the same sentiments as He, is to judge of things as He did. Jesus Christ judged that true greatness consisted in humility, and that the shortest and surest way of attaining it, was by means of humiliations:—that the happiness of a true Christian is to be

found in suffering ; and that such a one is never so perfectly contented as when enduring something in the cause of justice :—that to be really happy and rich, we must be detached from the riches and pleasures of this world—that whosoever hateth and loseth his life shall save it :—that the Kingdom of Heaven will be taken by those who do violence to themselves. Are these indeed our sentiments ? Without self-flattery, or dissimulation, let us sound our hearts. If they do not reprehend us, then we may hope that we are true disciples of Jesus. But if His sentiments are not ours, it is in vain that we imagine we have the Spirit of the Son of God, or *that we are walking worthy of the vocation in which we are called* ; since we have not the same affections, the same motives, the same virtues, as our Divine Master. As regards ourselves, has His teaching been in vain ? Happy those souls that have caught the spirit of Jesus ! They have found a hidden treasure of ineffable value—having found that, they have found all.

COLLOQUY.

Spirit of Love ! which animated Jesus during His evangelical career, come Thou and fill me with zeal in the service of my Master, and a right judgment in all things. In examining the motives which actuated me and the affections of my heart, I see how widely they differ from His. I flatter myself too often that I have learned the lessons Thou didst teach, O Lord, when on earth ; but I have not learned them thoroughly. I find that I am still under the influence of worldly maxims.; that I avoid humiliation, while professing an admiration for humility. Give me grace to be more consistent, and to practise what I know to be in accordance with Thy divine teaching.

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RESOLUTION.

I will strive to participate in the devotedness of my Dear Master, by really practising what He has taught.

PRAYER.

Our Father, and Hail Mary.

Last Week but one before Advent.—Wednesday.

God seeth in secret.

Take heed that you do not your justice before men, to be seen by them: otherwise you shall not have a reward of your Father, Who is in Heaven.—S. MATT. vi.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us place ourselves near to our Lord, and listen to the warning He gives in these words, against hypocrisy.

II. PRELUDE.

Give us grace to understand to what perfection Thou desirest all Christians to attain; but particularly those who make an especial profession of piety.

I. POINT.

The virtues of such as call themselves the disciples of Jesus Christ, must be solid.

Unless your justice shall abound more than that of the Scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the Kingdom of Heaven. The Scribes were the theoretical exponents of the Law; the Pharisees rigidly observed its external practices. And yet our Lord condemned them as being hypocrites, saying: *All their works they do to be seen by men.*—The piety that is pleasing to God must be unfeigned: it is the heart that He looks into, it is with the heart that He wills to be served. *Not serving to the eye, as it were pleasing men, but as the servants of Christ, doing the Will of God from the heart, with a good will serving, as to the Lord and not to men.* An outward appearance only of piety, renders a person worthy of greater condemnation, than another who makes no profession at all of being religious. Such an affectation is hateful in God's sight, since holy practices are put to the unholy use of disguising the reality. Jesus incurred the bitter hatred of all the Scribes and Pharisees, by unmasking their hypocrisy. If we examine the impulses of our heart and mind, and our outward seeming, side by side, and find any discrepancy between them, let us thank our Lord for His salutary warning. It has aroused our attention, and makes us see in a stronger light, that too often self-esteem, and the desire of being esteemed by others, is prompting us to imitate those to whom our Lord said: *For this you shall receive the greater judgment.* Let one of our most fervent prayers be, that we may be preserved from all unreality: that Jesus will so increase His love in us, that the desire of pleasing Him only may predominate over any other motive.

II. POINT.

The higher our spiritual advantages are, the more simple should our hidden motives become.

The good pleasure of God, as our principle of action, must never therefore be substituted by a seeking after our own satisfaction, under any form whatever ; nor the thought of the eternal recompense, by a desire of present applause. It is against this fatal mistake that, being forewarned, we must be forearmed. We must watch ourselves narrowly, to see that any lower aim glide not into our best works, to vitiate them ; and make them unworthy of God's recognition of them as service rendered to Him. It was solid piety that Jesus asked of His disciples when He was with them ; and He as clearly asks the same of us to-day. The many means of perfection offered to such as are specially consecrated to Him, gives Him an undeniable claim to a straightforward devotedness in His cause ; which is simply the promotion of His honour—of His glory. But what if the unaffected piety of some who live in the midst of the busy world, should reproach the self-seeking of those in religion who, in consequence of their greater privileges, are reserving to themselves the *greater punishment* of which our Lord speaks. *To whomever much is given, of them much shall be required*, and the *much* that is demanded of us may be summed up in this : the lifting up of our daily life above the mire of self-glorification, and presenting it in quiet sacrifice to the Heavenly Father. Thus we shall *do all for the glory of God*. This ought to be easy : but Jesus knew that for us, with our inverted tendencies, it would be difficult, and that it would oblige us to unflagging watchfulness.

COLLOQUY.

O Lord Jesus, I thank Thee with sentiments of liveliest gratitude, for having shown me plainly that my good works are not worthy of Thine acceptance, unless they be free from

the desire of gaining any applause, save Thine. Thou hast given me simple rules for making all my actions pleasing in Thy sight ; Thou askest of me that I should not merely *do them to be seen by men*—to secure their good opinion, which is valueless,—but to put all hypocrisy far from me, and to consecrate my daily life solely to the promoting of Thy glory, O God.

RESOLUTION.

To act at all times with the simple intention of pleasing God only.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

With a good will serving, as to the Lord, and not to men.

PRAYER.

Take, O Lord, and receive.

Last Week but one before Advent.—Thursday.

The Holy Eucharist is the Source of Unity.

They shall make Me a Sanctuary and I will dwell in the midst of them.—EXODUS xxv.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves Jesus Christ dwelling in the Tabernacle ; and thence ceaselessly bestowing on us His abundant blessings.

II. PRELUDE.

O Jesus, Source of all holiness, replenish us with a great

esteem for the Sacrament of the Altar: may we count ourselves most happy in receiving the gifts Thou dost there bestow.

I. POINT.

The Eucharist renders the worship paid by the Church to God, divine; and animates the piety of the faithful.

The Holy Eucharist gives to Christian souls a value which is infinite, and a character which is divine; this is a prerogative that no other religion has ever claimed—can ever claim. By means of the Eucharist, the One Holy Catholic Church presents to Her God homage worthy of Him. She offers Him His Beloved Son, who is equal to the Father; Who has a right to ask—and to obtain all for which He pleads on our behalf. It is not the Church alone that offers prayer, and praise, and sacrifice—Jesus Christ unites in Her acts of supplication and thanksgiving, and is Himself both Priest and Sacrifice. Hence a true proportion is maintained between Catholic worship and its Divine Object; between God and the acknowledgment of our allegiance. On the one side, supreme majesty and strict justice—on the other, abasement, and infinite satisfaction; or (as it has been said by a pious author), “on the one side, wonderful gifts, and still more wonderful promises—and on the other, acts of praise and thanksgiving, which equal in dignity the benefits bestowed. What a source of glory for God! what an inexhaustible treasury of graces for the Church! The Eucharist is the divine bond, uniting earth and Heaven: it animates and sustains piety in the Church. It enkindles fervour, it inspires sometimes fear, sometimes compunction, always confidence and love. It puts into our heart such sentiments, as render us agreeable to the Most High. Take

away the Eucharist, and soon, very soon, piety decays : souls become barren, and worship becomes nothing more than a repetition of cold and lifeless ceremonies." We know and we feel that the Divine Son of Mary is there, upon the Altar, in Person. Before Him we present ourselves—to Him we offer our acts of adoration.

II. POINT.

The Eucharist is the source of those shining virtues which adorn the Church.

The Eucharist promotes true, fraternal charity, and is the most powerful bond of Unity. At the Altar all the faithful are nourished by the same Bread—the Bread of Love ; before the reception of which they lay aside the recollection of injuries, and pray that they may be forgiven, even as they forgive. There can be no place for hatred, resentment, unkindness, or coldness, amongst those who are reunited before the Altar of God, in the Presence of Jesus—the Friend of all whom His love has gathered together. The love which existed between the early Christians called forth the admiration of the pagans ; was it not because they—being fed at the same Holy Table, with the Divine Manna—proved by their fraternal charity the effects it produced in their hearts and lives ? And so it should still be with us. They who observe us should be convinced by the unfailing charity of our discourse, and our actions, that *we have been with Jesus*. It is charity, and its accompanying virtues of humility, peaceableness, gentleness, firmness, and truth, that form the crown of honour and glory which adorns the Church of the Living God. By means of the Holy Eucharist we are living members of Jesus Christ, alive with His Life,

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in divine union with Him and with the Saints; and when we reach Heaven, it will be because we have accepted as true those words of our Lord, which are the key-stone of the Catholic Faith: *He that eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, hath everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.*

COLLOQUY.

Thanks be to Thee, O Jesus, the Holy Eucharist will ever be the strength of the Church, according to Thy promise: *Behold I am with you all days.* By It may I, who have consecrated myself to the service of God and His Holy Church, be protected: by It may I be succoured in the hour of trial and temptation; by It may I be fortified in my last struggle with the enemy of my salvation, and so pass into Thy visible Presence, according to Thy word: *If any man eat of the Bread of Life, he shall live for ever.*

RESOLUTION.

To make frequent acts of spiritual Communion to-day, in thanksgivings for the Divine Gift of the Eucharist.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

He that eateth Me, the same also shall live by Me.

PRAYER.

Soul of Christ.

Last Week but one before Advent.—Friday.

The readiness of Jesus to forgive us.

I will arise, and go to my father : And when he was yet a great way off, his father saw his son, and was moved with compassion.—S. LUKE XV.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves Jesus, opening His Arms and His Heart, like the Father of the Prodigal Son, and inviting us to avail ourselves of His mercy.

II. PRELUDE.

Heart of Jesus—Heart of the most tender, and the most indulgent of all fathers, we beseech Thee to fill our hearts with feelings of that respect, love, and confidence, which are so justly Thy due.

I. POINT.

The Heart of Jesus has for us a truly paternal love.

Our Saviour has given to us the supernatural life of grace. He has prepared for us the blessed life of glory: it is to His love that we are indebted for the one and the other. His Divine Heart has for us the same feelings, the same loving inclinations, which that of the best of fathers has for a cherished child. We are sure of finding in It compassion—indulgence—goodness—and inexhaustible love, which even our many defects cannot weaken. He provides for all the

wants of our souls. He nourishes us with the corn of the elect—and strengthens and encourages us by the sweet action of His grace. If we fall (did not the Prodigal Son?) He kindly lifts us up again—if we grow weary, He animates us to fresh exertions—sometimes by a caress, which may take indeed the form of punishment, but is none the less a caress. His love is ever tempering the severity of His justice. *When Thou art angry Thou will remember mercy.* How is it possible not to love so good a Father? how could it be that we should fail in confidence? or not obey Him out of that intuitive sense of gratitude which love inspires in the hearts of His true children?

II. POINT.

Towards His most guilty children even, the fatherly Heart of Jesus is gentle and merciful.

The touching parable of the Prodigal Son presents to us, after all, but a faint picture of the sentiments of the Heart of Jesus towards ourselves, and towards all sinners. We indeed see therein pourtrayed the manner in which He not only watches for the return of the wanderer, but comes out to meet him with open Arms, and upholds him in His embrace. But besides this, He may be seen going after the lost sheep until He find them; sending His Ministers with full power to act for Him; and to tell those who are wandering from the fold, that their Saviour is longing to pardon them. He causes solemn warnings to reach them by means of His messengers, as also His promises to restore all their former rights and privileges as His children (lost through sin) if they will only come back to their Father's House. Our past engagements, the numberless instances of our ingratitude have not dried up the Fountain of grace.—

Has He not, over and over again, accepted the expression of our regret? the sincerity of our repentance? But while thankful at the remembrance of our own pardon, let us not selfishly forget, nor be indifferent to, the blindness of those who obstinately walk on towards the precipice of utter ruin; who approach it, in going farther from their Saviour, Whose Sacred Heart they pierce anew. Hear us, O Father, listen to the prayers we address to Thee on behalf of Thy guilty children; touch their hard hearts, and triumph by the strength of Thy grace, over the resistance they offer. Grant that, reunited in the One True Fold, we may together celebrate Thy paternal goodness, with cleansed and faithful hearts.

COLLOQUY.

I offer to Thee, O Divine Saviour, my homage of love and confidence; beseeching of Thee, at the same time, to pardon all my ingratitude, and my offences—and to give me the graces necessary to purify me from the stains of all my past sins.—And, my Father, recall to-day some wanderers from the paths of sin, that they may be numbered amongst Thy faithful children, and console Thy Sacred Heart.

RESOLUTION.

To pray much, to suffer, if it be God's Will, for the conversion of sinners.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

I will arise, and will go to my Father.

PRAYER.

O Loving Jesus.

Last Week but one before Advent.—Saturday.

Mary's practical Faith.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like to a grain of Mustard-seed.
—S. MARK XIII.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us contemplate the faith of the Mother of God; and see how it is observable in her actions.

II. PRELUDE.

O God, Who didst bestow on Mary so great faith, give to us more constancy in ours; and increase that which we already possess.

I. POINT.

The faith of the Blessed Virgin in the midst of trials.

Our Lady has been called “the grain of mustard-seed”; because, in consequence of her humility, she appeared so little in her own eyes, and in the eyes of the whole world; but afterwards she increased so much in greatness and power, that she might be likened to a “Cedar of Libanus,” the joy of the whole earth. The beginning of the glory and greatness of Mary was the little grain of Faith, deposited by God within her heart in the moment of her Immaculate Conception: this ever growing, produced in her those acts of faith which were distinguished by their intensity. This Faith shone forth in the hour when it was most tried. She

believed, without hesitation, in the word of the Angel, when he announced to her that she should become the Mother of Jesus, without detriment to her vow of chastity; so that it was by faith she conceived the Son of the Eternal Father. Again, during the cruel Passion of our Saviour, when He was overwhelmed by the deep floods of humiliation and suffering, when the scandal of the Cross shook the faith of the Apostles, Mary remained firm and unshaken, standing beside her Son. O faithful Virgin, ask of Jesus daily to increase our faith.

II. POINT.

Mary's faith was the cause of her loving zeal, displayed after the Resurrection.

It resulted from Mary's conception of faith, that in her was produced the Conception of the Incarnate Word. Saint Augustine says "that the most holy Virgin was herself the exemplification of a hidden mystery, to be revealed in due time: she had a more perfect knowledge of God, of divine and mystic doctrine, than all the Saints of the Old or New Testament had, or could have". As we have before seen, Mary hid herself behind the veil of silence, lest attention should be drawn to her; but after the Resurrection of her Son, she watched, for several years, over the Infant Church; it was for this our Lord left her on earth. By Him she had a definite work given her to do; and then it was that she drew upon the stores of divine science she possessed, and transmitted it to the Apostles and disciples; making manifest to them the mysterious secrets which had been entrusted to her keeping. Let us again imitate Mary, and by our words and example edify those with whom we may have to do: building them up in the Faith, if God permit us thus to promote the

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interests of His holy Church. What a privilege it must have been to listen to our Lady, the Seat of Wisdom, as she spoke of the mysteries of the faith; but she can help us from Heaven, by asking that the gift of knowledge may be bestowed on us her children, and our faith be thus deepened and increased.

COLLOQUY.

My Mother, thy cousin proclaimed thee blessed, *because thou hadst believed*; I have recourse to thee, to obtain an unalterable faith in the midst of every trial—an active faith which shall give life, strength, and movement to all the powers of my soul; a faith which shall sanctify all my thoughts, my desires, and my actions.

RESOLUTION.

To live by the spirit of faith.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Thou art blessed, because thou hast believed.

PRAYER.

We fly to thy Patronage.

FESTIVALS.

Feast of the Guardian-Angels.

We have, each one of us, a Guardian-Angel.

Thou hast made the Most High thy Refuge: there shall no evil come to thee: for He hath given His Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.—PSALM XC.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us imagine that we see everywhere upon the earth God's Angels—eager in their readiness to offer to mankind good services. In particular we perceive our own Guardian-Angel.

II. PRELUDE.

May our good Angels obtain for us the grace to understand with what care and tenderness they watch over us; so that we acknowledge their services by entertaining a grateful love towards them.

I. POINT.

What the office of the Guardian-Angels is with regard to ourselves.

The Most High hath given His Angels charge over thee. Let us consider that the relations established by God between the holy Angels and ourselves, are most honourable to us, and most advantageous. These celestial Intelligences, who see His Face continually, have received commands to protect us, and to guide us along the path towards Paradise. Each one of us has a prince of the royal court of Heaven as an escort: this thought must needs be a cause of confidence and joy. If we now heard for the first time, that God accounted us worthy to be always accompanied throughout our earthly pilgrimage by angels, should we not be greatly surprised? overwhelmed with the thought of our own unworthiness of such an honour? We have from our infancy grown familiar with the idea. It is therefore well to look upon the fact in this light: I—a creature drawn from the dust of the earth—have ever with me, by the Will of God, as my friend and companion, a pure, sublime being, whose duty it is to watch over me: to guard my body and soul from peril. How precious in God's sight must our welfare be! What gratitude do we not owe to these happy spirits, who ward off dangers, defend us against the attacks of the devil and his angels, present our prayers to God, discover the truth unto us concerning His Will; and at all times and under all circumstances act towards us as ministers of the Divine Goodness.

II. POINT.

What our duties are with regard to our Guardian-Angels.

Saint Bernard in a few words, expresses succinctly what our feelings should be concerning our Guardian-Angels. "We owe them," he says, "respect, devotion, and confidence." These angelic companions being near us always, accompanying us everywhere, are the continual witnesses of all our actions : what modesty, what vigilance over ourselves, ought we not to observe! with what a feeling of reserve should not their holy presence inspire us! Our Guardian-Angels give a perfect example of obedience and humility, of zeal for the glory of their Divine Master, of devotedness in His cause, of constancy in the accomplishment of the charge they have received: our devotion to them should consist in the practical imitation of their virtues. They are warriors in the army of our Lord, Who has Himself fought against and overcome our enemies : they powerfully assist us in conquering ourselves : we should turn to them with confidence in all our perils and temptations. We thank Thee, O God, for having provided us with such protectors ; may we be always attentive to their instructions—courageous under their guardianship to repel the powers of hell—and, after having gained a final victory over our last enemy, may we be presented by them before Thy holy tribunal; to receive from Thy Lips, O Jesus, a favourable sentence, which shall admit us into the innumerable company of the heavenly Hosts.

COLLOQUY.

Holy Angel, whom God has deputed to be my guardian, how indebted I am to thee for all thy loving care over me ! And yet I cannot but reproach myself for oft-repeated acts of ingratitude towards thee. I so often need to be reminded that I am never out of thy sight. I must have caused thee to grieve over my waywardness many times ; but by God's

grace, I will strive in future to follow the example thou dost give me of doing His Will unquestioningly. I will take pleasure in pleasing thee ; confiding in thee for protection during life and in death. I beg of thee to lead my soul on its return to God, in safety through the ranks of my enemies, into His Presence.

RESOLUTION.

To speak often with my Angel-guardian.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

He conducted me, and brought me safe again.

PRAYER.

Holy, Holy, Holy.

Saint Teresa.

The perfection attained by this Saint.

I will praise Thy Name, O God my King, for ever ; yea, for ever and ever.—PSALM. CXLIV.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us imagine we hear this Saint saying : “ I am Teresa of Jesus,” and then hear our Lord replying : “ I am Jesus of Teresa ”.

II. PRELUDE

O great Saint, thou didst labour so ardently for the good of thy Institute, and to please the Divine Majesty in all things ! Obtain for us at least somewhat of thy zeal, and of thy fidelity.

I. POINT.

The ardour evinced by Saint Teresa in the service of God.

We may say that a desire of martyrdom—of suffering—was innate in this Saint. When a little child, she set out to seek death for the sake of Jesus Christ, at the hands of the cruel Moors. Later on her strength and courage were plainly shewn, in the painful periods of desolation and of conflict through which it pleased the Divine Master to make her pass. During twenty-two years of her life God caused her to feel most sensibly, and without mitigation, His justice and severity. His manifestations of love were changed into apparent rebuffs ; nevertheless while enduring this terrible suffering her constancy was unalterable, her confidence remained unabated. Far from resembling those weak souls who grow discouraged and lukewarm when they find not the consolation they seek, Saint Teresa did not even desire these favours, but sought only to become more like Jesus Crucified. She spared herself in no labours which could forward the work God had given her to do ; and in the prosecution of which, she encountered numberless occasions of bearing with much opposition and many humiliations. She spent her life, as it were, in an atmosphere of suffering ; her existence seemed to depend on it for support, so that there was to her but the alternative, “to suffer or to die”. The love of Jesus

kept alive in her the desire of suffering ; and the fact of suffering perpetually renewed in her heart that divine love. Is our love for God in any way comparable with that of His dear Saint—Teresa ?

II. POINT.

The degree of perfection to which Saint Teresa attained.

Charity comprehends a knowledge of every virtue, and the whole science of theology. Having possessed it in an eminent degree, Teresa made wonderfully steady progress in perfection. And in possessing this virtue, she possessed all others. Evangelical poverty elevated her above the desire of any earthly goods ; humility, above that of human praise: patience raised her soul beyond the reach of this world's evils : and confidence in God carried her over all the obstacles which opposed her designs. It has been well said that charity transformed her, even while on earth, into a seraph. We find in her that true devotedness of love which proves itself not only in thoughts and words, but also in every action. This is the love which we should entertain towards our Divine Spouse : a real love, which perpetually sacrifices itself for the Object loved : a disinterested love, which prefers its Object above all the advantages He may have the power to bestow : a fervent love, that decreases not in the face of difficulties : a constant love that never belies itself. To-day as we contemplate the glory of Saint Teresa in-Paradise, let us pray that she may by her intercession, win for us this real, disinterested, fervent, constant love; and the grace to mortify in ourselves all that may be displeasing to our Divine Lord. How ardent must be her desire that He should reign in our hearts ! How earnestly will she

plead with Him on our behalf, if we really long to love Him as she does.

COLLOQUY.

How precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints! O my God, who can fail to admire the marvellous purposes of Thy love in regard to her, whom Thou didst on this day call away from earth, to the enjoyment of the delights of Paradise! As I consider the heights of perfection to which Thou didst lead her, I feel how little advance I have yet made in true spirituality; and this, on account of the weakness and inconstancy of my love for Thee. I beg that through the intercession of Saint Teresa it may be strengthened and increased: so may I be enabled to bear unshinkingly the crosses and afflictions wherewith Thou shalt be pleased to prove me, before I can be fit to be numbered with the Saints in glory.

RESOLUTION.

To make myself more worthy of the protection of Saint Teresa.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

To suffer—or to die!

PRAYER.

Take, O Lord, and receive.

Saint Simon and Saint Jude.

Saint Simon and Saint Jude suffer martyrdom together.

As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.—S. JOHN xx.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves the Saviour of the world, sending forth His Apostles to the conquest of souls.

II. PRELUDE.

Give us grace, O Divine Master, to imitate Thy Apostles in their zeal and fidelity even unto death.

I. POINT.

Saint Simon and Saint Jude are models to us of true zeal.

Saint Jerome compares these two holy Apostles to *the two candlesticks that stood before the Lord of the earth*, which shed around the light of zeal and sanctity ; for truly they enlightened the world by their doctrine and the holiness of their lives. Saint Simon carried the good tidings of salvation into Egypt, while Saint Jude was proclaiming them in Mesopotamia. Afterwards they united their efforts to disperse the darkness of idolatry in the country of Persia, and remained together until the hour of their martyrdom. We may to-day contemplate and admire the fervour of their zeal.

as we see how it was exercised in combating the errors of paganism—in labouring unweariedly to propagate the Faith—in overcoming in themselves all fear of suffering and of death—in overthrowing idols, and in using their power to cast out devils. It was this which obliged the king of Babylon to avow, that these Apostles were more powerful than the gods of his nation. When zeal can bear to be violently opposed, and under the strain of such opposition increases rather than diminishes, then it is true, and really serviceable to the Church of God. Are we ready to expose ourselves to perils, or even to inconvenience, to help souls to rise after their falls? to prevent their continuing in any evil course? or are we timid and cowardly, taking flight at the first approach of trouble or perplexity, growing discouraged about the smallest obstacle that resists our designs? Saint Simon and Saint Jude mutually aided and supported each other, in their arduous undertakings and manifold difficulties. Are we, on this point also, following their example?

II. POINT.

The spirit of moderation and of self-sacrifice which characterised the zeal of the Apostles.

We are told that having gained the favour of the prince, they used their power with him to prevent the death, by burning, of an idolatrous priest, who was their implacable enemy; saying that “they were not come into Persia to cause the death of the living, but to bring life to those that were dead”. When it was left to their choice whether death should be inflicted on themselves or their adversaries, they prayed to their Divine Master that He would accord to them

the honour of martyrdom, and at the same time convert the hearts of their persecutors. From this instance of the Apostles' moderation and self-sacrifice, we learn to regulate the fervour of our zeal : it should be accompanied by love and patience. As Saint Paul writes, *Charity is patient*: it endures without bitterness, the wrongs done to it, and joins meekness to patience. "Meekness inclines us to love those," says Saint Gregory, "with whom patience induces us to bear." The hearts of such as act in a spirit of true zeal, must needs be full of charity ; and in their words and actions, moderation, patience, unselfishness, and gentleness shine forth. May we not continually find occasions of being martyrs of charity? O God, still we thank Thee for having given to Thy Church for her edification, the bright examples of these holy Apostles, and of the multitude of Saints who have trodden in their footsteps. We beseech Thee to bestow on us grace to serve Thee, with a zeal ever regulated by charity and moderation.

COLLOQUY.

Thou dost teach me, O Lord, by the Festival of to-day, how to do Thee true service. Give to me the spirit of zeal which animated Saint Simon and Saint Jude ; that union of charity with energy, and patient forbearance with unselfish activity, which marks the history of their thirty-five years of toil and persecution. Let me never hesitate in my choice between right and wrong — between what is perfect and imperfect—but prefer that course of action which shall glorify Thee, and promote the spiritual welfare of others. Make me to love Thee, O Jesus, with my whole heart : so shall this love be the secret of all the success of my work for Thee, and keep alive within me the true spirit of the Martyrs.

RESOLUTION.

To encourage in myself the practice of zeal, according to the example of the Apostles.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Keep yourselves in the love of God.

PRAYER.

Soul of Christ.

Festival of All Saints.**The Joy of the Saints.**

I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of great thunders, saying: Alleluia, for the Lord our God, the Almighty, hath reigned.

—*APOO. XIX.*

I. PRELUDE.

Let us transport ourselves in spirit to Heaven—the Abode of happiness—where all the Saints are assembled: they surround the Throne of God, and celebrate His glory.

II. PRELUDE.

Grant us, O Lord, a great desire to reach the Celestial Country ; and grace to merit an entrance and a possession there.

I. POINT.

The triumph of the Elect in Heaven.

Let us contemplate with holy joy the enrapturing scene which the Church places before the minds of us, Her children, to-day. Desiring to sustain our courage amid the toil and the conflict inseparable from our present condition, she unbars the gates of the heavenly Jerusalem, and we are permitted to catch a glimpse of the rays of that marvellous glory which God has reserved for His Saints. And She seems to say : Look up and behold the great multitude that *no man can number, of all nations, and tribes, and peoples, and tongues* ; each one of which multitude has a past history—of temptation and sin, of conflict and failure, of trial and suffering : all, for they are of Adam's race. But now, *having been in all these things more than conquerors*, they bear the palm of victory : and on the head of everyone a crown is set, for their eternity of glory has begun, *and they shall reign with Christ for ever!* What feelings of hope and joy do we not experience as we remember that after a few short years at most, our earthly strife will be over ; and we shall take our place amongst those, whom with the eye of faith we gaze upon to-day. We too shall see the splendour of the Majesty of the Most High God, and contemplate the ineffable beauty of our Much-loved Jesus : together with the elect we shall offer Him the homage of perfect sanctity, as the fruit of His Redemption and the triumph of His grace.

II. POINT.

They whom Jesus has pronounced blessed on earth, will be blessed in Heaven.

In the Gospel of to-day Jesus pronounces a blessing on all who are preparing by a life of holiness, to receive that final benediction which will guarantee an entrance into the eternal Home of the Saints. *Blessed are the poor in spirit. . . . Blessed are the clean of heart. . . . Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice' sake—for they shall see God—for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.* As we bow down before our Lord to receive His blessing, let us praise and adore Him for the lessons of true poverty, holy purity, and obedient self-sacrifice He and His Saints have taught us. May we one day hear Him say to us, as to them: *Come ye blessed of My Father! . . . enter into the joy of your Lord.* Let us ask ourselves—as we look up and behold the Mother of Jesus, seated near her Son and surrounded by the Virgins who bear her company—whether our hearts are pure: as we think of the Apostles—whether our zeal resembles theirs: as we picture to ourselves the array of Martyrs—whether we are brave in those encounters which should end in death to self: as we consider the Patriarchs, the Prophets, the Doctors, the Confessors—whether we do all we can, according to our vocation, to advance the kingdom of our One Master, through His One Church. Let us remain in the company of all the Saints during this their Festival; take counsel of them, speak with them of our spiritual necessities, enlist their help, and unite with them in singing: *the Lamb that was slain, is worthy to receive power and divinity, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and benediction.*

COLLOQUY.

O all ye Saints, who have entered within the gates of Paradise!—together with the whole Church on earth, I rejoice to-day in thinking of your triumphant happiness. Bright hopes are renewed within my soul, as I consider that I may ere long be a sharer of your joy; but since it is perseverance which wins the crown, I entreat you to pray to God for me that I may be *faithful unto death*. You know the dangers and difficulties which beset my path; obtain for me the grace to pass safely through them all; and overcoming every obstacle, may I reach at length the glorious and eternal possession which our Beloved King has purchased for us with His most Precious Blood. How I long to sing with you the praises of Him, *Who giveth us the victory, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord!*

RESOLUTION.

To re-animate myself in the love and practice of virtue, by contemplating the blessedness of the Saints in glory.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

PRAYER.

Our Father, and Hail Mary,

All Souls' Day.

Our duty towards the dead in Christ.

It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins.—II. MACHABES XII.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves that place of sorrowful and painful expiation, in which souls that must yet suffer to satisfy the divine justice are being purified from the stains of sin.

II. PRELUDE.

Inspire us, O Lord, with a tender and thoughtful compassion for the souls in Purgatory, so that we may by alms, prayers, and penances, alleviate their sufferings.

I. POINT.

A consideration of the punishment which has to be endured by the souls in Purgatory, should make us desire to ameliorate their sufferings.

According to the Doctors of the Church, the actual pain endured amidst the fires of Purgatory is so severe that it could not be borne in this life; yet the most intense suffering for those detained there, is caused by the conviction that through their own fault their entrance into the enjoy-

ment of the Beatific Vision is delayed. Oh! the longing of the holy souls to see God—what must it be? What words could express the pitiable condition of a soul—disengaged from the burden of the flesh, yet still retained a captive—tending towards that Being, Who is its Centre, with an urgency which we fail to comprehend. Vain are its efforts to quit the prison-house into which the Just Judge has commanded it to be cast, *until it shall have repaid the last farthing*. If we know what it is to experience a painful longing to see God even in this life, where the body deadens our spiritual perception *of those things which are eternal*, we should be the more compassionate towards the faithful departed; and aid them by every means which charity and piety may suggest. We cannot remain insensible to their needs surely, when we have it in our power to alleviate them. Shall we not, in view of their sufferings, pray most earnestly for their relief? offering also acts of mortification, and gaining indulgences on their behalf. Would it not be cruelty on our part, if we acquitted ourselves of our duties towards the souls in Purgatory with indifference?

II. POINT.

A consideration of the pains of Purgatory should make us avoid the smallest faults.

While we compassionate with all our heart, the suffering souls detained in Purgatory, we must not neglect the warning with which their condition furnishes us. They are expiating those venial sins which were left unexpiated at the hour of their death; their penance is suppletory. If we would escape the punishment of Purgatory, we must carefully

avoid every sin ; and purify ourselves with greater zeal from those which through our frailty we commit : for we see with what severity Divine justice visits them, if penance for them be reserved for another life. This present life is the time of mercy and of merit : one hour of patience under injury—a victory gained over our passions—a good work done out of pure love for God—any pious practice performed in the spirit of penance, is perhaps of more avail to efface venial sins, and pay our debts to Divine justice, than a year's suffering in Purgatory. God, in His goodness, places so many expiatory means in our way: how is it we make but little use of them? Is it not certain that the holy souls bitterly regret that their time of acquiring merits was allowed to pass so unprofitably? that they failed through negligence *to bring forth worthy fruits of penance?* We will pray for them, and strive to help them, especially during this month: and at the same time let us examine into the reason that we now spare ourselves, notwithstanding the warning voices which speak to us from the midst of the fires of Purgatory. Shall we not resolve to bear patiently, willingly, the slight sufferings God now gives us to endure for His Sake, and our own ultimate benefit? or do we intend to consign ourselves to long years, perhaps, of torment? Punishment for sin is inevitable : whether we suffer it now or hereafter, God leaves it with us to decide.

COLLOQUY.

O God, Who art both just and merciful, accept, I beseech Thee, the good works, penances, and indulgences I desire to apply to the relief of the holy souls. Enable me to do them much loving service ; and by the suffrages offered on their behalf, to obtain for them a speedy entrance into Heaven, where they may contribute to Thy glory according to their

intense longing. And by Thine assistance may I expiate my own sins as far as possible, during these days of grace and of merit ; so that it may not be long that I shall have to bear the anguish of being separated from Thee, my God, when I shall have departed out of this world. May all the holy souls that enter Heaven to-day, pray for me !

RESOLUTION.

To do more for the souls in Purgatory.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Have pity on me, have pity on me, at least you my friends.

PRAYER.

Our Father, and Hail Mary.

Saint Andrew.

The fervent zeal of Saint Andrew, and his love for the Cross.

The next day again, John stood and two of his disciples : and beholding Jesus walking, he said : Behold the Lamb of God : And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus : And Andrew was one of the two : He findeth first his brother Simon ; and brought him to Jesus.—S. JOHN I.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us picture to ourselves Saint Andrew, at the moment when he exclaimed, at the sight of the Cross on which he was to die : O good Cross, so many years desired, and now at length granted to my longing soul !

II. PRELUDE.

O Saviour Jesus, make us to participate in the love of Saint Andrew for the Cross.

I. POINT.

Jesus detained Saint Andrew and his fellow-disciple, until towards the evening of the day on which they first saw Him. The zeal of Andrew, in bringing his brother Peter to Jesus.

Andrew saw where He abode, and stayed with Him that day. Who could describe that first interview between Jesus and His first Disciple ? how rapidly the moments must have passed. . . . Let those who fear to follow Jesus, who will not take the trouble of becoming recollect and of talking with Him, let such *Come and see* if it is not a thousand times more delightful to speak with Him and listen to His words, than to take part in the most interesting conversation on worldly matters. O Jesus, keep Thou our hearts near to Thy Sacred Heart ; favour us with an interview, as Thou didst favour Saint Andrew ; and enkindled with the fire of Thy charity, as he was, may we share in his zeal and in his desire of winning souls for Thee. When Saint Andrew left Jesus he found his brother, and said to him : *We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.* Let us

observe here the faith of this Apostle—his zeal, and his eager desire to bring other disciples to his Master: he hastened to communicate to them the happiness he had himself discovered. It was growing late, the paschal solemnity was about to begin; but the new and zealous Disciple doubtless hoped his Master would approve of his conduct and excuse his importunity; so, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, he brought his brother at once before our Lord's notice. Let us not defer until to-morrow that which the movements of grace urge us to do to-day; for we may be running the risk of missing an interview with Jesus; or an opportunity of doing something for Him. We should lead others to Him; “and we know not,” as Bossuet says, “whom we are leading”; it may be some chosen soul, who is to be brought to God by our instrumentality. Saint Andrew little dreamed that his own brother was that Rock on which our Lord Jesus Christ would build His Church, and that to him were so shortly to be given the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.

II. POINT.

The love of Saint Andrew for the Cross.

When Saint Andrew became the Disciple of Jesus Christ, he took the Cross for his portion. He had already been well instructed, by that lover of penance, Saint John-the-Baptist; and now the teaching and example of our Lord strengthened in him the desire which met with its accomplishment in his life of toil, and in his martyr's death. We too, should love the Cross, and carry it manfully all the days of our life; we should love it, because Jesus loved it so much, and because of the example of Saint Andrew, who, *on* perceiving it, prostrated himself—adored it—and burst forth

into transports of delight : *With confidence and great joy I come to thee : And do thou, in like manner, rejoice and be glad at receiving a disciple of Him Who hung on thee.* If we love the Cross during life, in death we shall cling to it, in heart and soul ; and pressing it to our dying lips, say with confidence : O good Cross.

COLLOQUY.

O adorable Cross, most precious Cross, reign ever in my heart ! I would desire thee—love thee—seek thee—as the glorious Apostle did, whose Festival we keep to-day. O good Cross ! in all my trials, and humiliations, and sufferings, I will search for consolation only in Jesus Crucified. Near thee, I will contemplate Jesus,—by thee, I will go to Jesus, —in Thy arms I will remain united to Jesus.

RESOLUTION.

The sight of the Cross shall ever be a means of raising my soul to Jesus Crucified.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER

O Jesus, living in Mary.

MEDITATIONS.

THE FIRST THURSDAYS IN EACH MONTH

First Thursday in October.

The Holy Eucharist ensures perseverance.

*He that eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, abideth in Me and I in him: I will raise him up at the Last Day.—
S. JOHN vi.*

I. PRELUDE.

Let us imagine ourselves present on that occasion, when Jesus gave the clear and wonderful instruction on the Holy Eucharist which Saint John records.

II. PRELUDE.

We adore Thee, O Jesus, and we beseech Thee to enable us so to receive Thee in Holy Communion, that we may persevere in Thy grace until the end, and meet death without fear.

I. POINT.

Perseverance is the effect of Holy Communion.

Perseverance is the gift after which we aspire : it is the guarantee of our coronation in Heaven : it maintains our union with Jesus Christ—that incorporation which the holy Sacraments effect, by making us one with Him indissolubly. Perseverance is bestowed on us by God—it is the token of eternal predestination ; and our Lord teaches us that there is in the Holy Eucharist a special virtue to enable us to obtain it. We, through it, *abide in Him*. If therefore we would persevere, we must communicate often—communicate worthily. And the most powerful means to obtain the gift of perseverance, is that spiritual Nourishment which sustains the life of the soul. How is it that many Christians come so seldom to the Holy Table to renew their strength ? If they really understood the value of the benefits there received, they would not thus absent themselves, and thereby run so great a risk of losing power and energy to continue *faithful unto death*. On the other hand, if we receive this spiritual food frequently, what carefulness should we not perceive in ourselves ! How watchful should we be to avoid the recurrence of the least faults ; for it is the soul in which Jesus abides that perseveres ; and Jesus and sin cannot dwell together. *He is faithful*, He will never be the first to attempt to dissolve the union brought about by the Holy Eucharist. With what intensity should we hate every sin, and keep them all far from the abode of our heart, in which He not only deigns, but desires and delights to dwell. Fill us, O Holy Spirit of God, with humility ; so shall we approach the Altar with confidence, and receive the gift of final perseverance.

II. POINT.

The Holy Eucharist delivers us from the fear of death.

When our souls are united to God, death to us is but as the shadow of itself. What have we to fear from its darkness, in presence of the Source of Light and Life? Separation from God is the only real death, and it is this which even the Saints in their humility have sometimes feared. But if He be with us, by the participation of His Precious Body and Blood in the Viaticum, what real need shall we have to fear? In receiving It we may truly say: This is my God—hidden in the Sacred Host, Who maketh the beauty and glory of Heaven. He has but to lift the Eucharistic Veil, and I shall behold Him as He is. A few more moments only, and through the shadow of death I shall have passed into the clear light of the unseen world. He is my Protector: who will dare to attack, if He defend me? I bear *the Life* within my breast: can I then fear death? . . . O Jesus, how desirable hast Thou made death to become to Thy faithful ones! As Thou didst Thyself pass through its portals, so dost Thou now conduct each soul that is in union with Thee, beyond the range of its dominion once and for ever. The Blessed Sacrament received in our dying hour is a sacred passport, which ensures an entrance into the Heavenly Country. When they perceive how we are provided, the powers of darkness cease to offer opposition to our right to cross the frontier, and set foot within God's Kingdom. It behoves us then, each time we partake of this mystic Food, to consider It as being indeed Provision for our journey; and thus we shall ever be in a state of preparedness for those last steps, which shall bring us to the Feet of Him *Who sitteth upon the Throne, and reigneth as King for ever.*

COLLOQUY.

O God, may I persevere in Thy grace until the end of my life, daily being strengthened and refreshed with spiritual Manna ; and as my journey draws to its close, let me not fail to receive the Viaticum, which will ensure to my soul a safe passage through *the midst of the shadow of death*. *Into Thy Hands I commend my spirit, now and for always*. Living and dying in union with Thee, my Jesus, what need I fear ? *Thou art the Protector of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?* Thanks be to Thee, for Thy promise in which I place all my confidence : *He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood, hath everlasting life: and I will raise him up in the last day.*

RESOLUTION.

To approach the Altar as if to receive the Viaticum.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

He that eateth this Bread shall live for ever.

PRAYER.

Soul of Christ.

First Thursday in November.

The Holy Eucharist as the germ of the Resurrection-Life.

I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth in Me, though he be dead, shall live.—S. JOHN xl.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent Jesus Christ descending into our hearts to be our Viaticum, as we depart out of this life.

II. PRELUDE.

Filled with humility and with thankfulness at the sight of Thy infinite mercy, we praise and adore Thee, O Saviour of our souls! When Thou comest to possess them just before we quit this world, may we be found worthy of Thy condescending love.

I. POINT.

The Holy Eucharist is the pledge of eternal life.

He that eateth this Bread shall live for ever. To us is given in Holy Communion the Sacred Body of the Word Incarnate—His Immortal Body—His Spiritualised Body. As in dying we receive It into ourselves, we may say with confidence: *I shall not die, but live*, because of His own promise: *He that eateth Me, the same also shall live by Me: I will raise him up in the Last Day.* In our dead bodies, in

virtue of the Viaticum, a germ of life remains, which the corruption of the tomb cannot annihilate : a living impress is left on them, which nothing can efface. Yes ! *I shall not die, but live ; and shall declare the works of the Lord : The Lord chastising hath chastised me ; but He hath not delivered me over to death : Open to me the gates of justice : I will go into them, and give praise to the Lord.* Our hopes are founded upon the word of the Son of God concerning this most adorable Mystery, which is to us a solemn pledge of a glorious resurrection. We know that in Him and by Him *we shall be made alive.* This sacramental assurance is the consolation of the Faithful—since its original Cause robs Death of its victory, and deprives it of its sting. They who are intimately united to their Saviour by the grace of the Holy Eucharist, finding nothing else on earth that can satisfy the soul, long for the hour when they shall be filled with good things in His Visible Presence. *Now Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament makes known to us the ways of life—then He will fill us with joy, with His Countenance.*

II. POINT.

We must live as if consciously in the midst of death.

A Saint once said, when departing out of this world : “I am upon the road I have often trodden before—it is nothing new for me to die”. Each frequent communicant may truly say : *I die daily—I anticipate the moment of my union in glory with my God.* Our life on earth passes away like *the flower of the field, and its place shall no more be known.* We cannot tell what shall be on the morrow, as far as our earthly career is concerned, but we are convinced that by the power of the Divine Eucharist, wherever our

mortal remains may be laid to rest, there will they again appear, revivified—to be transplanted into Heaven by the Angels, who shall have guarded them as being the sacred seed of immortality. Having *been soon in corruption, they shall rise in incorruption—soon in dishonour they shall rise in glory: bearing the image of the heavenly.* Many theologians have expressed a belief that a special lustre will shine about those blessed ones in Paradise, who shall have attained to great perfection because of their frequent and worthy reception of the Blessed Sacrament. If we only had truer faith in It we should live more warily, and die more fearlessly. And a greater similarity would now exist between the guests who approach the Holy Table, and the Giver of the Sacred Feast ; *meeting into the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, we should grow up in Him, Who is the Head.* O Jesus, may we prepare each time to receive Thee with the loving fervour of a First, and the fervent love of a Last Communion. Thou hast promised *to be with us all days : when the mighty Angel shall declare that time shall be no longer—may we be safe with Thee for ever. May our conversation now be in Heaven ; whence we look for Thee, our Lord Jesus Christ, Who will reform the body of our lowness, made like to the Body of Thy glory.*

COLLOQUY.

O Jesus, God of Love ! give to me such ardent desires for more intimate union with Thee, by means of the Holy Eucharist, that my heart may be consumed for love of It. Therein may I seek Thee, and find Thee : and living in Thee, die daily to all that is of this world. In receiving Thy Precious Body and Blood, may I immolate myself with Thyself—Who art the One True Victim—to the glory of

the Father. May I, when the short day of this life shall have been spent in faithful service, fall asleep in Thy embrace ; and rest in peace until *the dead in Christ shall rise : and this mortal shall put on immortality.*

RESOLUTION.

To become daily more attached to God, and detached from all that is earthly.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

O Death ! where is thy victory ?

PRAYER.

O Jesus, living in Mary.

MEDITATIONS.

THE FIRST FRIDAYS IN EACH MONTH.

First Friday in October.

The Heart of Jesus is the Divine Model for our imitation.

*This is My Beloved Son in Whom I have pleased Myself:
Whereunto you do well to attend, as to a light that shineth in
a dark place, until the day dawn, and the Day-Star arise in
your hearts.—II. S. PETER I.*

I. PRELUDE.

Let us contemplate the perfection of every virtue as found
in the Heart of the God-Man.

II. PRELUDE.

O Sacred Heart ! whence the Saints have learned the way
of salvation, make our hearts capable of understanding thy
teaching, and imitating thy virtues.

I. POINT.

The sentiments of the Divine Heart with regard to God
the Father.

The most observable characteristics of the Heart of the Son in relation to His Heavenly Father may be thus briefly summarised : love—obedience—devotedness. In the moment of His Incarnation, Jesus cordially offered Himself to the Divine Majesty as a perfect victim of love : *Wherefore when He cometh into the world He saith : Sacrifices, and oblations, and holocausts for sin Thou wouldest not, neither are they pleasing to Thee, which are offered according to the Law.* He then, as it were, laid down a rule of action, not only for Himself, but for all who should enrol themselves as His followers : *Behold I come to do Thy Will, O God.* Do these words find a responsive echo in our hearts ? Is it the Divine Will which prompts our desires, and moulds our good deeds ? Is it hidden within our thoughts ? does it find expression in our words ? Obedience is necessarily the form of development which true love takes—and its further unfolding is devotedness. We say we love God with all our hearts, —where are the proofs of the truth of the assertion ? can they be compared to those given by the Sacred Heart of Its love ? If it is God's design even rigorously to try our love and obedience, will our devotedness carry us courageously into the midst of sacrifices ? bravely through every difficulty ? Taking the first utterance of the Incarnate Word as our maxim : *Behold I come to do Thy Will, O God !* we shall not fail to be numbered hereafter with *those who have come out of great tribulation* into the Home of perfect love.

II. POINT.

The sentiment of the Divine Heart with regard to mankind.

Mercy—charity—bounteousness—such are the character-

istics of the Heart of Jesus in relation to ourselves and all mankind. His dealings towards repentant sinners manifest clearly to what a degree He loves His creatures, and with what willingness He pardons their offences against Himself—so disinterested is His charity. How often when on earth, was He touched by the grief and misery He witnessed: how greatly was He moved to pity by the widow of Naim as she mourned the loss of her only son: did He not weep Himself over the grave of Lazarus? And when He beheld the city of Jerusalem, how afflicted was His Heart on account of its impending ruin. When many thousands followed Him into the desert and had nothing to eat, He said to His Disciples: *I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with Me now three days: I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint by the way.* What sympathy, what tender care, what readiness to afford relief, we find in Jesus' Heart! The infinity of His mercy and His love towards man, opens up a wide field of contemplation. . . . We pass in thought from His more personal acts of loving-kindness, so often recorded in the Gospels, to the consideration of His deeds of universal charity—the culminating act of Redemption on Calvary—the culminating act of sanctification—in the Cœnaculum. His Sacred Heart would not only be pierced for man's salvation, but It devised a plan whereby our hearts should, in the Sacrament of Love, be united indissolubly to It, and thus be made strong in holiness.

COLLOQUY.

O Sacred Heart! would that I might learn to practise thine own virtues of love, obedience, and devotedness towards God: and towards my neighbour unbounded charity. Would that I were always intent on doing the

Divine Will—that Will in which *I am sanctified by the oblation of the Body of Jesus Christ.* Help me, O Lord, to renew aright the consecration of myself to Thy service, and in imitation of Thy perfect love, be ready for any sacrifices which the glory of the Heavenly Father demands. *Make me to be one according to Thine Own Heart, who shall do all Thy Will.*

RESOLUTION.

To imitate the virtues of the Sacred Heart more intently.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

With my whole heart will I seek Thee, O Lord.

PRAYER.

Take, O Lord, and receive.

First Friday in November.

The Heart of Jesus is that of our Mediator with the Father.

There is One God, One Mediator of God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus.—I. TIM. II.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves Jesus Christ in Heaven, shewing His Sacred Wounds and pierced Heart to the Heavenly Father, through these to obtain mercy for us.

II. PRELUDE.

Heart of Jesus, inspire us with those sincere feelings of confidence, which may enable us to glorify Thee, and find favour with God.

I. POINT.

The Heart of Jesus would draw from all men an acknowledgement of God's love and mercy.

Jesus is both God and Man. As Man He has made satisfaction to the Divine Justice for us all :—because He is God, His satisfaction is of infinite value, the least part of which might have redeemed the world. His Loving Heart, not being content with offering to us His graces, and His merits to supply for our deficiency and incapableness, moves Him to plead our cause, and to become our Intercessor with the Father. To give His prayer an irresistible force, the *One Mediator of God and Man*, bears before the Throne on high the scars of His glorious Wounds ; and because of these, our cause is won. *We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Just, and He is the Propitiation for our sins.* We are commanded to pray for one another—we invoke the Mother of our Saviour, and all His Saints—we have many mediators on earth and in Paradise, but all their pleadings are offered to, and united with those of, the One, Only Divine Mediator. No mediate intercessor will ever be repulsed, who goes to the Father, *through Jesus Christ our Lord*, the immediate Intercessor with Him. How much more, earnest would our prayers become for ourselves and others—how much more confidently should we invoke the saints, if we remembered that any appeal made to the Heart of Jesus, is carried to the Father of all mercies, and

cannot be rejected.—So may we receive *the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls!*

II. POINT.

Motives of gratitude towards the Sacred Heart.

With what feelings of grateful love should we not remember the infinite obligations we are under to the Incarnate God! When we consider His inexhaustible charity, our confidence in Him must of necessity be augmented; indeed, if we sincerely desire to reach Heaven, there can be no doubt of our doing so; for then our desire exactly coincides with that of Him, *Who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth*: for this He asks the Father—for this He pleads the merits of His Passion and Death—for this He renews upon our Altars each day His One Great Sacrifice—the pure Oblation of His Precious Body and Blood. Confidence in the Sacred Heart should be linked with gratitude: the recollection of past mercies which It has obtained, and the hope of future blessings which It will yet procure, may well assure to us that unvarying peace and joy which can spring from no other source. Are we constant in our intercession for others? Are we endeavouring to make the love of Jesus better known and valued? What plans has our love devised by which to glorify our Divine Mediator? for if true it will not be inactive. Let us make His Loving and Compassionate Heart the Object of a more devoted attention, the Subject of our constant thanksgiving; renewing deep down in our hearts the consecration of our best affections to It. Thus may we merit to be eternally loved by the Most Holy Trinity, to Whom be praise and adoration now and always!

COLLOQUY.

In Thy Name, O Jesus, will I go to the Father, confiding in Thy merits, and begging of Thy Saints to unite their intercessions on my behalf, to the pleadings of Thy Divine Heart. Do Thou increase in me both quiet confidence, and grateful love; so that while relying on the power of Thy mediation, I may shew forth Thy praise *by publishing the memory of the abundance of Thy sweetness: and rejoice in Thy justice.* This is my sure trust: *that Thou wilt do the will of them that fear Thee: that Thou wilt hear my prayer and wilt save me.*

RESOLUTION.

To unite confidence in the Sacred Heart to my grateful love for Its goodness towards me.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

He will do the will of them that fear Him.

PRAYER.

Soul of Christ.

MEDITATIONS.

SATURDAYS.

First Saturday in October.

The Feast of the Holy Rosary.

*Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the Fruit
of thy womb.—S. LUKE II.*

I. PRELUDE.

Let us remember that the words relative to the Incarnation, so often repeated in the devotion of the Rosary, were directly inspired by the Holy Ghost.

II. PRELUDE.

O Mary, Mother of mercy and love, deign to re-animate our piety towards thyself ; and make us so to understand how great are the blessings attached to the daily fervent reciting of the Rosary.

I. POINT.

The Rosary should be a daily devotion

They who profess to be especially devoted to the dear Mother of their Lord, should shew their love by faithfully reciting that form of prayer, which the children of the Church have during so many ages, used to the honour and exaltation of Jesus and Mary. How many fervent souls with life-long fidelity, have paid their daily tribute of love and veneration to her, in the words with which the Angel heralded the mystery of the Incarnation : *Hail Mary ! full of grace; the Lord is with thee!* The Church has appointed a particular day to be kept in memory of the revelation concerning the Holy Rosary, made by the Blessed Virgin to Saint Dominic ; and on which her words to him may be brought vividly to our minds : “Thou shalt inform my people that it is a devotion most acceptable to my Son and me”. It is a pious memorial of those different mysteries of love, as manifested joyously, sorrowfully, gloriously, which Jesus accomplished for us, and in all of which Mary bore her part. They are brought before our notice in order to excite in us confidence—contrition—hope; and to renew in us constantly, love for the practice of those virtues which shone forth so pre-eminently in the Virgin-Mother, and her Divine Son. The Rosary possesses the advantages of both vocal and mental prayer—and is enriched with many indulgences. How various and multiplied then are the motives which should fortify our resolutions, to make a good use of this sublime and efficacious devotion.

II. POINT.

Mary's title of “Our Lady of the Rosary”.

The Rosary has been called the Crown of Mary : from this metaphor we may understand how delightful to us this devotion should be,—like a chaplet of sweet flowers which we may arrange and offer daily for her acceptance, being well-assured that she will give us in return the choicest benedictions she can bestow. We have heard of and seen so many instances, in which it has proved to be a powerful means of sanctification and salvation—dangers have been avoided, victories won, and favours obtained through its constant and pious use. And should not these examples induce us ourselves to profit better by this prayer of the Rosary, which is suited to the capacities of the wise and the simple, the learned and the unlearned : such as are beginners, and such as are far advanced in the spiritual life—all the true children of Mary, and faithful disciples of her Son, find it to be a source of untold blessings. It will incite us to take greater pleasure in this devotion, if we carry up our thoughts to-day to Mary's throne ; and see her gazing lovingly down upon her countless clients, as she receives from each one a chaplet in token of reverent affection. We prostrate ourselves at thy feet, O Queen of Heaven, and present to thee our homage of gratitude and veneration ; we also ask thee to pardon all our negligence and coldness when reciting the Rosary, by which we have deprived thee of so many flowers of true devotion ; for often do we make our chaplet for thee with but little care and attention.

COLLOQUY.

Thou, O God, hast Thyself manifested how pleasing to Thee is the devotion of the Rosary, whereby Thy Son is honoured in and with His Mother. It was in compliance with Thy holy Will that she taught this prayer to Thy

servant Saint Dominic; may I use it as he did, to obtain great blessings through her intercession. Help me, O Divine Spouse of Mary to meditate aright upon the Mysteries it recalls, and to practise the virtues which it pourtrays. I present to Thee, O Virgin Mother, this chaplet formed of bright leaves of joy, sacred thorns of sorrow, and glory's celestial roses; accept it as an offering of your child's devotion, and give me your blessing.

RESOLUTION.

To say the Rosary with greater attention.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Gentle Mother, through whom we have found Him, both God and Man, intercede for us all.

PRAYER.

We fly to thy patronage.

Second Saturday in October.

The Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

And Elizabeth filled with the Holy Ghost, cried out: Whence is this to me that the Mother of my Lord should come to me? The Mother of JESUS was there; and JESUS also was invited to the marriage.—S. LUKE I. . . . S. JOHN II.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves the most holy Virgin at Nazareth, fulfilling her maternal duties towards her Son: and then think of her at His Right Hand in Heaven.

II. PRELUDE.

O Mary! because thou wert the chosen one of God, thou didst bring forth a Son, whose Name is Jesus: because thou wert ever faithful to His grace, thou art now crowned the Queen-Mother of the Great King in Heaven: make us faithfully to correspond to the designs of God.

I. POINT.

Mary has ever made use of her great dignity to procure the glory of God.

Mary is, in the strictest sense of the word, the Mother of God—for the God-Man is but One Person, and that Person is Divine. *For the right faith is that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ is both God and Man: and yet He is not two, but one Christ: One altogether, by unity of Person*—and of this One August Person, Mary is the Mother. She was such at the moment of the Incarnation, such in bringing forth her Son, and such must she be eternally. “If any one confesses not that Emmanuel is really God, and that the Blessed Virgin is consequently the Mother of God, let him be anathema.” There is in her maternity an infinite dignity, for she calls Him her Son, Whom the Angels adore as their Lord and King. And of this dignity she has ever made use to advance the glory of God; through her shine

forth to us the Divine Attributes in the Incarnation and all the various Mysteries in which she took part. She glorified her Creator also by attaining to an incomparable height of perfection. By means of her union with Jesus, she derived from Him a fulness of grace, surpassing that acquired by all the Saints : she is, as Saint Bonaventura says : "the first amongst Virgins, the "Mirror of Confessors, the Rose of Martyrs, the Mistress of Apostles, the Oracle of Prophets, the Daughter of Patriarchs, the Queen of Angels". There is none superior to her but God ; she merited to be chosen for the accomplishment of His grandest purposes, when on earth—and her claim to fill the highest place in Heaven, next to her Divine Son, has been rendered indisputable, because of her fidelity to her marvellous vocation as the Mother of our Lord. Our respective callings may vary greatly, but we should all have the same end in view that Mary had—the perfect accomplishment of God's holy purposes—saying with her: *Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me according to Thy word.*

II. POINT.

Mary, by virtue of her dignity, co-operates with God for the salvation of mankind.

In becoming the Mother of the *Firstborn amongst many brethren*, Mary becomes the Mother of us also ; He being the Head and we the members. Esther understood that she was raised to the throne by God, for the good of His chosen people ; and faithfully did she make use of her queenly privileges, to promote the designs of Providence. And Mary, being called to a far higher destiny, likewise compe-

hended the reason of this elevation, and the sublime duties laid upon her when *He That was Mighty regarded the humility of His handmaid, and did great things in her.* The secrets of God's Will were made known to her, and she understood she was elected by Him to co-operate in the work of Redemption,—that through her Maternity the happiness of the human race would be ensured. The first Eve had proved herself unworthy of her dignity *as the mother of all the living*, for through her instrumentality misery and death came upon all men: the second Eve proved herself worthy of her dignity as the Mother of the God-Man, and of all who seek her help, and love her Son. She pleads our cause with Him, and intercedes for us with all the tenderness and compassion of her true mother's heart. *Whence is this that the Mother of our Lord should come to us* with her powerful protection, and assistance? Because of her maternal desire that the children whom God has given her should praise and glorify Him throughout eternity.

COLLOQUY.

O Mary, Mother of God, how full of joy and happiness is the thought that thou art now so near to thy Beloved Son, and that He will not refuse to grant the requests thou dost make to Him on my behalf. Obtain for me the grace of fidelity to my vocation; by following thy example, and by placing the fulfilling of God's holy Will and the promotion of His glory constantly before me, may I at length reach thy throne, to thank thee in person for all thy maternal goodness, and to enjoy for ever thy companionship and that of Jesus, Who was born of thee.

RESOLUTION.

To honour Mary more frequently on account of her divine Maternity.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for me.

PRAYER.

O God, Who by the Immaculate Conception,

Third Saturday in October.

The Purity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: And therefore also the Holy Which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.—S. LUKE i.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us enter the little House at Nazareth with reverence, and there contemplate Mary kneeling in profound recollection before God.

II. PRELUDE.

O Jesus, Divine Spouse of our souls, by the intercession of Thy immaculate Mother make us to be perfectly pure in body and soul.

I. POINT.

We should have recourse to Mary in order to obtain and preserve interior purity.

The Archangel Gabriel was sent to Mary, who in a three-fold manner was a pure Virgin, as Saint Bernard says. A Virgin in body—in soul—she also had made profession of perpetual virginity ; therefore she merited to be chosen as the Mother of the Saviour. Her mind was so exempt from every sinful imagination that she was deemed worthy to bring forth the God of all purity. “In her affections,” says Saint Ambrose, “there was not the slightest trace of aught that could vitiate her purity : this was the reason the Angel assured her that in the Mystery of the Incarnation her vow of virginity would not be violated, and that the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost would render her purity divine.” Let us have recourse to this incomparable Virgin, that she may cause us to be free from all that is contrary to perfect purity in our hearts and minds. Let us take Mary as our model, who by the solemn profession she made of chastity on the day of her Presentation in the Temple, consecrated herself to a life which befitted the high dignity for which her Creator had destined her. God delights to visit pure souls, indeed only such are worthy to receive Him. *Our Beloved goeth down into His garden, where the lilies of chastity flourish, and when the day breaks, and the shadows retire, then will He gather them, to bloom for ever in Paradise.*

II. POINT.

We should have recourse to Mary, so that she may obtain for us exterior purity.

Mary's unparalleled virginity has been mystically compared to a chariot of transcendent beauty, on which the Son of God passed through the firmament between Heaven and earth, and became Incarnate. "In her was accomplished the greatest of all God's miracles," says Saint Augustine, "of the manner of which man can understand nothing (finding it unprecedented and inexplicable) save that it was wrought out in accordance with the Almighty Will of the Creator." O Mother of Jesus—teach us how to win the high privilege of being united in body and soul with thy Son ; of being one in heart and mind with Him. How carefully should we practise vigilance over our senses, our thoughts, our affections ; how continually should we exercise ourselves in mortification, which is the guardian and faithful companion of holy purity. Jesus comes to dwell within us ; with what carefulness should we watch lest the habitation of God *being violated, He should destroy it.* May the contemplation of the exterior modesty of Mary make such an impression upon us, that we may imitate her manner even unconsciously ; may the mantle of her holy reserve cover us, and let us never cast it aside. We cannot follow her example without God's special help ; but do thou, O spotless Virgin, pray for us that we may be so assisted by it all the days of our life, that we may become worthy to be near thee in Heaven.

COLLOQUY.

O Queen of Virgins, how lovely was thy purity ! Chaste Spouse of the Holy Ghost, how sublime were thy prerogatives ! Jesus dwelt with thee, for thou wert worthy, by reason of thy consecrated virginity, to entertain the All-pure God. May the contemplation of thy perfect chastity give

me a higher esteem for this virtue, that I may with *all watchfulness keep my heart*, and guard my senses, claiming thy assistance according to my need in the hour of danger. As I venerate thy unsullied virginity, so may I, through thy intercession, attain unto purity both of body and mind.

RESOLUTION.

To venerate the holy purity of the Mother of Jesus with greater love and devotion.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

How beautiful art thou, my beloved, how beautiful art thou!

PRAYER.

O Jesus, living in Mary.

Fourth Saturday in October.

The Patronage of our Lady.

He that honoureth his Mother, is as one that layeth up a treasure.—ECCLES. III.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves the Blessed Virgin in Heaven; with what joy she extends her maternal protection to all the children of the Church.

II. PRELUDE.

O Mary, our Mother and Protector ! thou knowest the dangers we incur while passing over the stormy sea of this life : come to our help, guide and protect us !

I. POINT.

We should ask God to grant us the favour of enjoying the powerful patronage of Mary.

We understand from the Word of God, and the teaching of Holy Church, that we may ask of Him, by the merits of Jesus Christ the privilege of being helped and protected by a patron Saint. The prayers of the Saints, and their patronage are means of grace. And if this be true, as it most assuredly is, what must be the efficacy of the prayer and protection of the Queen of Saints, who by a single act of perfect acquiescence to the Divine Will, in the moment when her Son was conceived by the Holy Ghost, merited to take a place in the regard and esteem of her Creator, higher than any other of His creatures could, however holy. Therefore Saint Thomas hesitates not to declare that if the patronage of one Saint be sufficient to effect the salvation of many, that of Mary might ensure God's gift of eternal life to all mankind. Is she not more powerful than all the Angels and Saints in Heaven, and the just on earth ? That Saint Paul trusted greatly in the intercessory prayers of his converts we gather from his asking them so earnestly for himself: *You helping withal in prayer for us, that for a certain spiritual gift obtained for us by means of many persons, thanks may be given by many in our behalf.* Again, in writing to the Philippians he expresses himself as being confident that he would be

enabled to advance God's interests *through their prayers*—and he tells Philemon that *through his prayers* he hopes to carry out his desire of visiting Colossa. Do not these instances suffice to prove that the prayer of even the least of God's servants, control the destinies of men? How mighty then must be the influence of the intercession of the Mother of Jesus, when offered for those who fly to her patronage!

II. POINT.

We should ask of God unbounded confidence in the glorious patronage of Mary.

We need to be enlightened by the Holy Spirit of God in order to understand what Mary is; and how much she loves us all, especially such as are truly devoted to her. We cannot, without a divine inspiration, have that confidence in her which the Saints have evinced; nor imagine the happiness she experiences, when she—the Queen of Heaven, can effect a reconciliation between us and her Son, or serve us in any way. Neither can we, without the grace of God, appreciate nor desire the patronage of Mary; which is a benefit so infinite, that we shall not fully comprehend it, until we actually realise the glorious advantages it will have procured for us in Paradise. Devotion to Mary is so great a good, because it is the source of innumerable eternal blessings; and this devotion being, as we see a gift of God, we should ask it of Him most earnestly, that we may be more seriously impressed with the importance of her patronage. How anxious are the people of the world to place themselves and their interests and schemes, under the patronage of those who possess a great name, or much influence! Can we favourably compare our desire to theirs, with respect to ear-

nestness and solicitude, when we seek to obtain, and ensure the continuance of, the patronage of no less a person than the Queen of Heaven?

COLLOQUY.

O Mary! I know that thou art my intercessor—that thou speakest of thy maternal interest in my welfare, to Him Who will one day be my Judge. By the effect of thy patronage may I increase more and more in His favour; and be delivered from all those my enemies who would injure my cause. I place it entirely in thy hands, beseeching thee to guard me from all danger both of body and soul—in life and in death. May I seek daily to prove myself more worthy of thy care and protection, and of claiming the privilege of calling thee my patron. Do thou vindicate my right to do so, when summoned before the tribunal of Thy Son.

RESOLUTION.

To ask of Jesus an increasing confidence in His dear Mother's protecting power.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Her neighbours shall be brought with gladness and rejoicing into the Temple of the King.

PRAYER.

We fly to thy patronage.

Fifth Saturday in October.

The Name of Mary is dear to us in life and in death.

And the Virgin's name was Mary.—S. LUKE i.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us imagine we hear the mention of Mary's Name in Heaven, when first made known to the Angels in connection with the Mystery of the Incarnation.

II. PRELUDE.

May we love to speak thy name, O Mary, and may we find in it consolation and hope.

I. POINT.

The Name of Mary is dear to us in life.

The Mother of Jesus received a name which had been reserved for her by the Heavenly Father. It was He Who directed Saint Joachim and Saint Anne to give their holy child the name of "Mary". This beautiful name, as a saint expresses it, came forth from the treasury of celestial beauty, to be the admiration and joy of all the earth; and Holy Church teaches us to pray that all God's faithful people, *rejoicing in the Name of the most holy Virgin Mary and*

enjoying her protection, may, by her loving intercession, be delivered from all evils here on earth, and be found worthy to attain to everlasting joys in Heaven. Her faithful servant, Saint Bernard; thus addresses our Lady : “O Virgin most sublime, and worthy of all praise, thy name is so very sweet, so highly cherished, that in pronouncing it with the lips, the heart becomes enflamed with love : one thought of it revives the spirit of thy children”. Saint Bridget heard our Lord saying to His Blessed Mother : “Whosoever shall invoke thy name, and place his confidence in thee, while firmly purposing to change his life, to him I will give these things : contrition for his sins—the means of satisfying My justice—strength to persevere—and at length the kingdom of Heaven”. Have we not ourselves often experienced the great interior gratification and happy results that attend the invocation of Mary’s name? a name possessing such depth of meaning, and capable of conveying to the mind so many sublime memories, that though heard and spoken a thousand times, it is ever new—ever refreshing to the wearied soul.

II. POINT.

The name of Mary is dear to her children in the hour of death.

If the name of our Mother shall have been loved by us during life on account of its many charms, and revered because of its sacred associations, in the hour of our departure out of this life its sweetness and its power will be peculiarly felt—for it will dispel the terrors of death, and give peace and serenity to the passing soul. They who are called upon to attend the dying should often repeat this name, for it will sustain them with hope in the midst of their agony, and put the

infernal spirits to flight. Saint Camillus gave this advice to his Religious : "Often remind those who are about to quit this world, to invoke the Names of Jesus and Mary"; and when he himself came to die, he uttered them with such intense affection, that those around him were greatly moved. We hear of another Saint who, in dying, sang : "O most sweet Mary, how delightful will it be to find myself in thy company ; may the last movement of my lips here be made in pronouncing thy beloved name". In meditating on her power with God we learn more and more, that if we desire to be consoled in our daily afflictions we should have recourse to Mary, render homage to her, recommend ourselves to her prayers, and above all invoke her name with confidence and love; firmly believing it to be an abundant source of grace now, and an unfailing means of assistance in the moment of death.

COLLOQUY.

O Jesus, O Mary, may thy Names be ever in my heart and on my lips ! Let me now accustom myself constantly to invoke you, so that when I shall be passing away from this world, I may, with much confidence, call on you for help, until death shall have released my soul. Then may I see thee, my Mother, coming to meet me and to conduct me into the Presence of thy Son. Obtain for me both pardon and peace ; and the unspeakable happiness of extolling and thanking thee throughout eternity, for having taught me how to love God better, and glorify Him according to thine own example.

RESOLUTION.

Often to pronounce the name of Mary with confiding love.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

The Virgin's name was Mary.

PRAYER.

We fly to thy patronage.

First Saturday in November.

Mary assists the holy souls in Purgatory.

If any man's work burn, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire.—1 COR. III.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves Mary, as the Queen of the suffering Church, assisting the souls that are enduring the flames of Purgatory.

II. PRELUDE.

O Mary, Consoler of the afflicted! may we participate in thy compassion for the poor souls that have not yet entirely satisfied the justice of God.

I. POINT.

We should pray to Mary on behalf of the suffering souls in Purgatory.

Although the suffering souls of the faithful departed, claim the assistance of our prayers and acts of mortification with so great urgency, they are certain of enjoying hereafter an eternity of happiness. They cannot repine, for they now clearly understand the goodness of God in providing a means (though so painful) whereby they may be purified, and rendered fit for the company of the Saints. But even during their detention in that prison-house, they are consoled and succoured by the Blessed Virgin; and by uniting our pleadings on their behalf to her own, she will effect their more speedy deliverance. Mary's domain extends to Purgatory: in speaking to Saint Bridget she said: "I am the Mother of all the souls that are waiting there, for the pains they are suffering to satisfy the divine justice are every hour ameliorated by my intercession to God for them". And will she not especially assist those who have manifested towards her during life, a constant and filial devotion? O Mary, most truly thou art the consolation of the suffering Church, the members of which have to pass through an ordeal of fire, after leaving the ranks of the Church militant, before they can enter those of the Church triumphant.

II. POINT.

Our own personal interests urge us now to secure the help of Mary.

Happy are they who hope in the Mother of their Saviour! We are taught by revelation that she has sometimes descended to Purgatory, surrounded by hosts of Angels, on the occasion of some one of her Festivals, to deliver those who (when in life) have on that particular day especially honoured her. While we implore her help for those who have left

us, and seek to please her by bearing voluntarily a part of their punishment, may we not be preparing for ourselves by these means, a more speedy entrance after death into the joys of Paradise. All that we thus do under Mary's direction for the dead, has the double advantage of assisting them, and of providing for our hour of like need. . . . Let us reverently wear our Lady's Scapular, and persuade others to do so, remembering that she has promised quickly to deliver from Purgatory, all those who shall have rightly availed themselves of the privilege of bearing that sacred badge of allegiance to her. With how great assurance that our perfect happiness in Heaven will not be long delayed, shall we leave this world, if we have been faithful to our vow of consecration to her service: she will now perhaps put means in our way of appeasing God's just displeasure on account of hitherto unexpiated sin, that we may in this life pay the last farthing of our debts to Him—that we may be deemed worthy of the grace to make an act of perfect contrition and entire resignation in dying—and so pass direct from earth to the enjoyment of the Beatific Vision. Such blessedness we know Mary has often obtained for her truly devoted children.

COLLOQUE.

O Mary, whom I love and honour as the highest of all God's creatures, accept my desire to love and honour thee with yet truer devotion. I know that thy children—the Spouses of Jesus—are regarded by God most favourably: that there is nothing which they may not obtain from Him. Ask Him, I pray thee, to pardon my sins, to grant me the gift of perseverance, the privilege of thy help in the hour of my death, and if not exemption from the pains of Purgatory, at

least therefrom a speedy deliverance. While thy known compassion for the suffering souls, fills me with a longing to assist them also, may I learn to rely on thine own promise to me, as being one of those who wear thy chosen livery.

RESOLUTION.

To pray to Mary oftener for the relief of the souls in Purgatory.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

O Mary, pray for all who have recourse to thee.

PRAYER.

Our Father, and Hail Mary.

Second Saturday in November.

Mary is the Help of the dying.

*Now there stood by the Cross of Jesus, His Mother.—
S. JOHN xix.*

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves how Mary watched her Son, as He was dying on the death-bed of the Cross.

II. PRELUDE.

Give us grace, O God; to hold firmly to the belief that Mary attends the faithful followers of Jesus in their dying hour—mysteriously but assuredly.

I. POINT.

Mary is the help of the departing soul.

Mary was watching by the side of her First-born Son, when He was in the midst of the intense sufferings of His dying Agony ; and she felt (as it has been graphically expressed) a grief so great, that if it could be divided and participated in, by all other creatures capable of suffering, none would be able to bear their own share of it. Her heart was a mirror of the Passion of Jesus Christ—while His Body was undergoing crucifixion, His Mother was being crucified in her soul. By her presence on Mount Calvary, she acquired the right of taking a mother's place near the death-bed of all those her children, whom Jesus gave to her—confided to her care, when he addressed her for the last time before His Death. Yes ! dearest Mother, behold us, the brethren of Jesus ; and in the hour of our death come to our assistance. Saint Chrysostom says : “the demons are unchained to assault the dying ; but that Mary, the Seat of Wisdom, knows how to turn their artifices and their delusions rather to the good of the elect ”. We do well to remember for our own consolation, and also that we may give solace to others, that Mary, *having crushed the serpent's head*, will aid us to gain the victory over the wicked angels. In that perilous and supreme hour, on which so much depends, let us trust in her, who as an “army set in battle array, will put our enemies to flight ”.

II. POINT.

Mary never forsakes her children.

Mary, in bringing forth her Son Jesus into existence—as Man, has also brought forth into eternal life each one of us His members. Death will come one day to take us out of this world, but it will be (as we trust) to pass to a better—endless life, of which Eve would have deprived us, but which through Mary, has been restored to us. How much we owe her! what thanks are her due! And when we recal her promise that she will never forsake her children in their dying hour, but will make herself known to them as a devoted Mother, in the bestowal of sensible help and comfort, how greatly increased should our gratitude become! Let us often ask that she may be present to encourage us when we pass—as we certainly one day must pass—*through the midst of the shadow of death*: and ask with confidence, knowing that a true mother cannot fail to come to the rescue of her child when she perceives him in some dangerous extremity. May we have grace often to invoke her in life, that her name may be familiar to our lips in death. O Mary, often attract us within the shelter of thy little home at Nazareth: there may we learn to know each member of the holy Household, so that in passing from earth we may recognise their presence, as we repeat for the last time here—the first time in another world: *Jesus—Mary—Joseph, let me rest in your blessed company!*

COLLOQUY.

Mary, be thou my protector in life, and in my dying hour make thy presence known to sustain and console me. When my soul is leaving its earthly tenement, come thou to

meet it; and conduct it safely out of the enemy's land, into the Country of the blessed. If *it return to God* under thy care, O Mother of my Saviour and my Judge, I need not fear but that He will be gracious towards thy poor unworthy child, for whose eternal happiness thou hast suffered and pleaded so often. In thee will I trust, O Queen of Heaven!

RESOLUTION.

To ask for Mary's assistance in my last hour, with greater earnestness.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Pray for me now, and at the hour of my death, O Mother of my Crucified Lord.

PRAYER.

Our Father, and Hail Mary.

Third Saturday in November.

The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Temple.

How beautiful art thou, and how comely, my dearest, in delights. . . . My perfect one is but one.—CANT. VI. . . . VII.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent to ourselves the Temple at Jerusalem,

and see the holy child—Mary—at the age of three years, ascending the steps which led to it, to consecrate herself to God.

II. PRELUDE.

O Victim of love and purity ! may we have grace to participate in the generosity of thy sacrifice, and do thou present us again before the Lord to-day.

I. POINT.

Virginity is an offering worthy of God's acceptance.

The Fathers of the Church compare the Blessed Virgin to the moon, by reason of the beauty of her whole being, and her incomparable chasteness. Hers is the perfect development of all loveliness, because purity heightens the beauty of things already beautiful, and embellishes those which in themselves are wholly devoid of it. For, is it impossible that there should be anything more exquisite than the purity of a chaste soul, which possesses the love of the Heavenly King, the approval of the All-Holy : it is entirely consecrated to His service—vowed to Him for ever. Such was the soul of Mary—Virgin of virgins—who being dedicated to her Creator at her entrance into the world, renewed this dedication of herself on the day of her Presentation, when the Angels recorded the first vow of chastity. Amongst all the virtues with which our Lady was endowed, that of virginity was pre-eminently her own ; and so dear was it to the Son of God, that He consecrated it by taking Flesh in her chaste womb. It is in partaking of His Body and Blood, the Fruit of her Virginity, that we are preserved blameless ; and learn to understand our obligation to cultivate in ourselves the

celestial virtue of purity. All the Saints have exercised extreme vigilance to guard this treasure of sanctity, watching over their hearts continually; for by a single voluntary thought it may be lost, and as Saint Augustine expresses it, the chastity of both body and soul tarnished. Happy indeed are we, if we have consecrated our heart to Jesus that it may be *as a garden enclosed*, wherein He may at all times enter, and gather the myrrh of mortification, and the sweet spices of love and humility.

II. POINT.

We should to-day renew our promises of fidelity to God, in our vocation.

Mary, in offering herself as a sacrifice in the Temple, presented an oblation agreeable in His Sight. At that tender age she had already been taught by her Divine Spouse that the Lord was no longer satisfied with the holocausts offered upon His Altars : but that there was a *sacrifice of praise which could glorify Him, and a way by which He would shew the salvation of God.* She had received the Holy inspiration : *Pay thy vows to the Most High,* and by her obedience to it she merited to be accounted for ever *blessed among women;* by her fidelity to her vow—*to be the way, by which God visited and wrought the Redemption of His people.* Before His Altar let us question our hearts as to the faithfulness with which we have kept our promises given to the Most High. What progress have we made in holiness since we consecrated ourselves to the service of God? Do our intentions, our innermost sentiments, and our exterior actions, "correspond with the sanctity of our holy estate? All the many graces and lights with which God has favoured us, have added fresh obligations to those that we contracted

when we first by *His mercy presented ourselves a living sacrifice, holy, pleasing to Him—our reasonable service.* As we, in thought, accompany Mary to the Altar of God to-day, we may by a fervent renewal of our consecration to Him—adding thereto a sincere act of sorrow for all our past failures in duty—make reparation for our faults ; and obtain abundant grace and strength through her intercession, who became the immaculate Mother of God.

COLLOQUY.

O Mary, sweet Lily of Purity ! may I like thyself, say with heartful gladness : *I have found Him, Whom my soul loveth ; I to my Beloved, and His turning is towards me.* My heart shall be wholly His, and by the grace of His love I will keep it *as a garden enclosed*, shut to the world and open for Him. Help me to seek to please God alone, to fulfil the duties of a consecrated life with extreme fidelity ; so may I, one day, be presented by thee before the Lord God Almighty, *Who is Himself the Temple* in the Heavenly Jerusalem.

RESOLUTION.

To unite my sacrifice of myself to Mary's act of oblation in the Temple.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Pay thy vows to the Most High.

PRAYER.

O God, Who by the Immaculate Conception.

Fourth Saturday in November.

Mary's perfect offering of herself to God.

Hearken, O Daughter, and see, and incline thine ear : and forget thy people and thy father's house : And the King shall greatly desire thy beauty : For He is the Lord thy God, and Him they shall adore.—PSALM XLIV.

I. PRELUDE.

We may again in spirit, witness Mary's Presentation in the Temple, to which after the lapse of a few years, the Lord of Heaven and earth would come, borne in her arms.

II. PRELUDE.

We know not in what way God may make use of the service we offer Him. O Mary, ask of Him in us and by us, to advance His own glory.

I. POINT.

The eagerness with which Mary consecrated herself to God.

Neither her extreme youth, nor the tender affection of her parents, could retain Mary from giving herself up to the service of God, that she might dwell in His holy Temple. She hearkened to the Divine Voice, forgot her people and her father's house—she could allow nothing to defer the sacrifice

—she must hasten to please the King, *Who greatly desired her beauty.* She had by her Immaculate Conception been fitted for her wondrous vocation; and her love for her Creator, at the hour appointed by Him, bore her up to His Temple. We may hear her using the words of her royal ancestor : *I have walked in my innocence, I will compass Thine Altar, O Lord : that I may hear the voice of Thy praise : and tell of all Thy wondrous works : I have loved the beauty of Thy House : and the place where Thy glory dwelleth.* Do we imitate the holy eagerness of Mary to carry out the designs of God? When he calls us interiorly to do something for Him, do we promptly obey? Is it not but too true that we have delayed the offerings we should have made Him of our love, our service? Has He asked us *to forget our own people, and our father's house* for His Sake? if so have we entirely, unreservedly consecrated to Him all our faculties? our whole being? The example of our Lady may well serve to arouse in us feelings of humility and regret, as we contemplate her readiness *to see* what the Divine Will was in her regard, and to *Incline her ear* to hear what the Lord God would speak in her,—and compare her conduct with our own. *He will speak peace unto His people, and unto His saints : surely Salvation is near to them that fear Him.*

II. POINT.

The perfection of the offering Mary made to God.

Scarcely, says a Saint, had Mary been received into the Temple, when she was enriched by God, with the most abundant and extraordinary graces. He set her apart for Himself, while she, by her own act, made of herself an entire and perpetual holocaust to Him. Thus was this most

innocent victim offered in the Temple, an oblation agreeable in the Eyes of God, most estimable in the sight of men and of Angels. She gave herself wholly—she knew not what reservation and half-heartedness in God's service were: she broke unhesitatingly the ties of mere natural affection; *God was to be her portion and her inheritance*—He was her All. She seems to us, as we look at her simple, yet most perfect act of self-sacrifice, to have anticipated the hour when she gave utterance in the presence of Gabriel to her heart's intensest feelings: *Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to thy word*—for she evidently knows no will but that of the Most High. The thought of the reward of Mary's exercise of faith and obedience may encourage us, when called to make a special oblation of ourselves to Him. By her was hereafter accomplished the prophecy that *The Lord should come to His Temple*: because of the clear radiancy of her perfect virginity, from it would arise a *Light to the revelation of the Gentiles; and the glory of His people, Israel*. What schemes of love and mercy may not God intend to work out through our instrumentality, if we also are true to our vocation, whatever it may be. Do we refuse Him nothing He asks of us?

COLLOQUY.

O Mary, my example, as I consider the marvellous perfection of the oblation thou didst to-day present to God in His Temple, I am obliged to own that I have permitted many known defects to diminish the value of the offering I have made of myself to Jesus, thy Divine Son: I have often consciously reserved some part of the sacrifice. I now beseech thee to pray for me, that I may be enabled more faithfully to accomplish all the obligations of my holy estate. On thee I

rely for assistance, for thou knowest what virtues I most need in order to please God perfectly, and canst help me to obtain them. As thou didst hasten to obey the divine inspiration to complete the consecration of thy whole self to thy Creator, so may I promptly recognise every holy impulse by a ready conformity of my will, and glad acquiescence.

RESOLUTION.

To be more faithful to the holy obligations I have contracted with Jesus.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

When shall I come and appear before the Presence of God.

PRAYER.

Take, O Lord, and receive.

DAYS OF RETREAT.

Day of Retreat in October.

The happiness of the Religious Life.

Blessed are the eyes that see the things which you see: For I say to you that many prophets and just men have desired to see the things that you see, and have not seen them: and to hear the things that you hear, and have not heard them.—S. LUKE x.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us represent Jesus Christ telling His chosen Disciples that they were happy, in that they might observe His actions more closely, and listen uninterrupted to His daily teaching.

II. PRELUDE.

O Jesus, since Thou hast elected us to be Thy companions, and to follow Thee nearly, give us a higher appreciation of our privileges, and a truer spirit of thankfulness.

I. POINT.

Happiness of the religious life.

Have we ever deeply considered the sense of these words which our Divine Master addressed to those whom He chose to be His most familiar friends? *Blessed are your eyes, because they see: and your ears, because they hear.* And whence this peculiar happiness? It arises from the companionship of Jesus. To see His good deeds—to follow after Him—to watch Him—to imitate Him—to listen to His voice, for instruction, for guidance, and for consolation. We may make the Psalmist's words our own: *Our eyes are unto the Lord our God: We will hear what the Lord God will speak unto us, for He will speak peace unto His people, and unto His saints.* Most blessed vocation! which ensures to us the personal intimacy—the familiar friendship of Jesus. Gratitude and humility combine to raise the question: why have we been called to enjoy this high privilege, in preference to so many others, whose minds have not been illuminated by the light of faith, who have not known the evangelical law, who have been deprived of the assistance of His grace? When we compare the benefits and favours which God has conferred on us, with those He has seen fit to bestow on the majority of mankind, we can but bow our heads, and confess that we have not availed ourselves of them as we ought to have done. We often forget that we possess the advantage of seeing things, and of hearing things, which just men have desired in vain to see and hear. *It is God Who divideth to every one the measure of faith;* and the greater this measure the greater power have we, if we will but exercise it, of enjoying the happiness of seeing Jesus and the wonders of

His love—of hearing His Voice within the depths of our soul—the whispered communications of His grace.

II. POINT.

Hath God spoken, and will He not fulfil ?

If we have been appointed to dwell in the House of the Lord all the days of our life, is not the one desire of our heart granted—to have the opportunity of knowing Jesus better by daily conversing with Him? What more can we wish for? Is it not worth our while to have left the transitory pleasures of this world, for the sake of enjoying constant intercourse with Him? When the young man who had great possessions found out the full extent of the sacrifice demanded by the observance of the evangelical counsels, he decided upon remaining in the world. On this occasion Saint Peter (acting as our spokesman) put a question to the Divine Master: *We have left all things, and have followed Thee: what therefore, shall we have?* The promise contained in the reply made by Jesus has, from that moment up to the present time, had a magnetic power, attracting to Himself the hearts of so many holy Religious: *Every one that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, for My Name's sake, shall receive a hundred-fold—and shall possess life everlasting.* How explicit, how exhaustive, is this declaration! Legitimate gratifications arising from wealth—from home affections—from the ordinary comforts of every-day life—have we not thankfully relinquished through simple trust in the words: *they who have left all these shall possess life everlasting.* Should a thought of regret ever tempt us to weigh our sacrifices—should the spirit of discontent ever seek to

tarnish the beauty of our heart's pure love which has once been given wholly to God, let us dispel the one and the other by the consideration that *in having nothing, we possess all things—most fully knowing that whatsoever God has promised, He is able to perform. They shall possess life everlasting.*

COLLOQUY.

I do well indeed to rejoice because of the happiness which is mine, in belonging absolutely to Thee, O Jesus—Thou art truly the *portion of my inheritance* in this life; and I have Thy sure promise that *Thou wilt restore my inheritance*—even Thyself—to me when I shall have reached the eternal shores. May I be ever looking unto Thee, and listening to Thy words of holy inspiration! Have I not been called to abide within the sanctuary of Thy Presence, to see and hear things—the mysteries of Thy grace—of which the world knows nothing? Help me, O Jesus! to prove to Thee my gratitude, and my appreciation of Thy goodness in my regard, by living only for Thee—seeking to become a saint, that I may glorify Thee more perfectly.

RESOLUTION.

To dwell upon the thought that my happiness should consist in holding constant intercourse with Jesus.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Receiving a hundred times as much, now in this time—and in the world to come, life everlasting.

PRAYER.

Take, O Lord, and receive.

Day of Retreat in October.

CONSIDERATIONS.

The work of Religious Persons is to sanctify not only themselves, but others also.

They are not of the world, as I am not of the world: Father, sanctify them in truth.—S. JOHN xvii.

I. POINT.

The presence of Religious in the world is its safeguard against the greater influx of evil.

How blessedly employed are the members of Religious Orders, who, within the cloister, plead with God for the world at large, but in an especial manner for that particular part of it in which (according to their several vocations) their lot is cast. Often have the judgments of the Most High been averted by the fact of their presence in some place, where iniquity might otherwise have sealed its doom. Though grievously offended by the many, God has, in numerous cases, repeated that act of Divine forbearance which marked His regard for His servant Lot: *Behold I have heard thy prayers not to destroy the place for which thou hast spoken: Make haste, and be saved in Segor, because I cannot do anything, till thou go in thither, against Sodom, where sin hath become exceeding grievous.* And even

that doomed city would have been spared at the intercession of Abraham, *had only ten just persons been found within it.* But there were none to do penance, and to appease God's wrath—to turn away His anger. Such is the esteem in which He ever holds the persons of His faithful servants—such the attention He ever pays to their requests, and deeds of penance on behalf of sinners. Religious persons are placed in the world by God for the purpose, not only of interposing their virtues as a shield between the arrows of His vengeance and the workers of wickedness, but also to attract to earth His richest blessings. They not only stay the lightning flash of His indignation, but also draw down the copious showers of His benedictions. The world may hold them in derision: it may utterly ignore their influence for good—disdain the very idea of accepting benefits through the medium of their intimacy with the Ruler of the universe—and yet! what would become of the world, if the Religious Life were extinct? Would not the word of the Lord by His prophet be again fulfilled? *I sought among them for some that might set up a hedge, and stand in the gap before Me, in favour of the land, that I might not destroy it, and I found none: I have poured out My indignation: I have rendered their way upon their own head.*

II. POINT.

The incomparable excellence of the Religious vocation.

They who embrace the vocation of a Religious adopt a life which is consecrated to continual prayer, direct work for God, the meditation of His law, and the practice of the evangelical counsels. They not only draw down heavenly

blessings upon the world at large, but being divinely sustained upon the mountain of interior solitude, they obtain for the Church also celestial graces. Her victories over Her enemies are due to the uplifted hands of those whose life is an unending prayer. What other vocation can be compared with this? Should not all of us thank and bless God for having established and preserved this exalted and perpetual estate of sanctity in the Catholic Church? And what should be the feelings of such as are permitted to enrol themselves amongst those, who are called apart by Jesus to live the life most nearly resembling His own? *They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.* Can we truly say that (judging ourselves by the advance we have made in the way of perfection) *we are not of the world, even as our Dear Lord was not of it?* Are our thoughts, desires, words, and actions, as free from all worldliness as those of the humble, unassuming, self-sacrificing Son of Mary? Jesus is the Model which every Religious could copy. Apparently He left prayer for work, and work for prayer, but in reality in Him these were identical—His whole life being one uninterrupted act of communing with the Heavenly Father. To make our lives conformable to that most perfect Life of unbroken intercourse with God should be our aim. May religious reserve and gravity in us be tempered by cheerfulness and holy joy, *our conversation being in Heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Day of Retreat in November.

The necessity of possessing the spirit of prayer.

If any of you want wisdom, let him ask of God, Who giveth to all men abundantly and upbraideth not: and it shall be given him.—S. JAMES I.

I. PRELUDE.

Let us remember that Jesus said we must strive to attain perfection: *Be ye perfect, as also your Heavenly Father is perfect.*

II. PRELUDE.

Give us grace to increase in divine wisdom, O Almighty God, and lead us on in the way of perfection.

I. POINT.

The spirit of prayer is necessary in order that we may obtain true wisdom.

Wisdom is a gift bestowed by God in large measure on those who ask for it, as Saint James assures us. If we possess the spirit of prayerfulness we cannot fail to obtain it, for we hold unceasing communication with the All-Wise, and He Himself will *direct our steps, and shew us the way of wisdom.* As Religious our responsibilities are great, and dare we flatter ourselves that we have all the qualities and talents

necessary for the fulfilling of our peculiar obligations? No, He Who has laid these obligations upon us must Himself replenish us with His own spirit, or we shall fail to *walk with wisdom toward them that are without*; and to regulate our conduct aright, *understanding what is the Will of God*. We know not what circumstances lie before us—what difficulties may assail us from within or from without—*what shall be on the morrow*; but relying on God we go forward, knowing that He will uphold us, if we trust in Him for guidance, leaning on His Wisdom. What strength and consolation is there in the thought He, Who cannot err in judgment *is nigh unto all them that call upon Him in truth, and that He will hear their prayers, and will save them*. Let us ask ourselves what pains we are taking to acquire this true spirit of dependence on God, which causes His faithful ones to seek Him so constantly, that *they may not be unwise?* Prayerfulness and wisdom go hand in hand. *If we want wisdom—and it may be that we are greatly in need of it—let us ask of God—especially during this day of Retreat—that He may give it to us abundantly—because it is more precious than all riches, and all the things that are desired are not to be compared with it.*

II. POINT.

By means of prayer we obtain a high esteem for the Religious Life.

Truly Religious persons find access to God most easy; and this very fact affords a motive for esteeming very highly the holy estate to which such are called. If we would arrive at perfection we must necessarily put a great value upon the extraordinary means we have had placed

at our disposal of becoming perfect, otherwise we shall not use them to the greatest advantage. We shall let them lie by unimproved ; and God, seeing His graces thus unappreciated, will eventually deprive us of them. But prayerfulness, being the medium of communication between the soul and its Creator, causes us to form a habit of seeing all things in the same light in which He sees them ; and thus are we assisted to form a right judgment concerning the trials that are allotted us—the obligations laid upon us—the responsibilities inseparable from the life of Religion which we have embraced. Well may we appropriate to ourselves the words of the Psalmist : *To Thee, O Lord, have I fled : teach me to do Thy Will, for Thou art my God : Thy good Spirit shall lead me into the right land.* We may have to fight, but it will be beneath Thine Eye—we may have to suffer—but through suffering it is that Thou dost teach us to submit to Thy Will more perfectly—many obstacles lie in the steep paths of sanctity, but we shall not fail to reach *the right land*, for we are following Jesus, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. If we *pray without ceasing* we shall be faithful to our holy vocation, and appreciate it more and more; and rightly esteeming the relations it has established between ourselves and God, we shall *learn to look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.*

COLLOQUY.

O my God, how is it that I am not continually occupied with the remembrance of my great indebtedness to Thee, on account of my religious vocation? Ought not my every thought to be directed to Thee? By Thy grace may I esteem more truly the privileges I possess, and through a

more diligent exercise of prayer, obtain a larger supply of that wisdom *which descending from above, is first indeed chaste, then peaceable, modest, easy to be persuaded, consenting to the good, full of mercy and good fruits, without judgment, without dissimulation.* When I have made all these characteristics my own, then may I hope that Thou wilt commend me as being a true Religious. And hast Thou not, O Lord, promised to give this heavenly wisdom abundantly *to all who seek it?*

RESOLUTION.

To pray with greater earnestness for the spirit of heavenly wisdom.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.

Religiousness shall keep and justify the heart; it shall give joy and gladness.

PRAYER.

O God, Who didst teach.

Day of Retreat in November.

CONSIDERATIONS.

True generosity towards God.

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind.—S. LUKE x.

I. POINT.**In what true generosity consists.**

Generosity towards God consists in refusing Him nothing, Not merely does it offer all to Him--making a perfect sacrifice of whatever may be called ours to give—but truly generous love is glad if God can find yet something more to ask for; and there will never be a refusal in such a case, He desires to prove the genuineness of our profession of love towards Himself; and we, if we are watchful over ourselves, know what is the next thing we have to relinquish. True generosity spares no defect—no imperfection; it will not even suffer the presence of a single thought, of which God does not approve. It is ever docile to the movements of grace, and is guided by the light received from Him. It causes us to give constant attention to the conforming of our exterior and interior life, to the interior and exterior Life of Jesus when on earth. A soul that is continually doing right to the utmost of its power, possesses this excellent virtue of generosity—the effect of that entire abnegation of self which is attained by the abandoning of our whole being into the Hands of God. There are many who now and again make an act of self-renunciation—to be cancelled, perhaps, within the next hour—but those who possess a really magnanimous spirit withdraw not the sacrifices they make, but delight in renewing and increasing them. They have once and for ever adopted the best plan of procuring the honour and glory of the Divine Master, by the daily, hourly immolation of all that is contrary to His Will. If we desire for ourselves the inestimable happiness which generous love ensures its possessor, even in this life, let us faithfully follow the light of grace, and

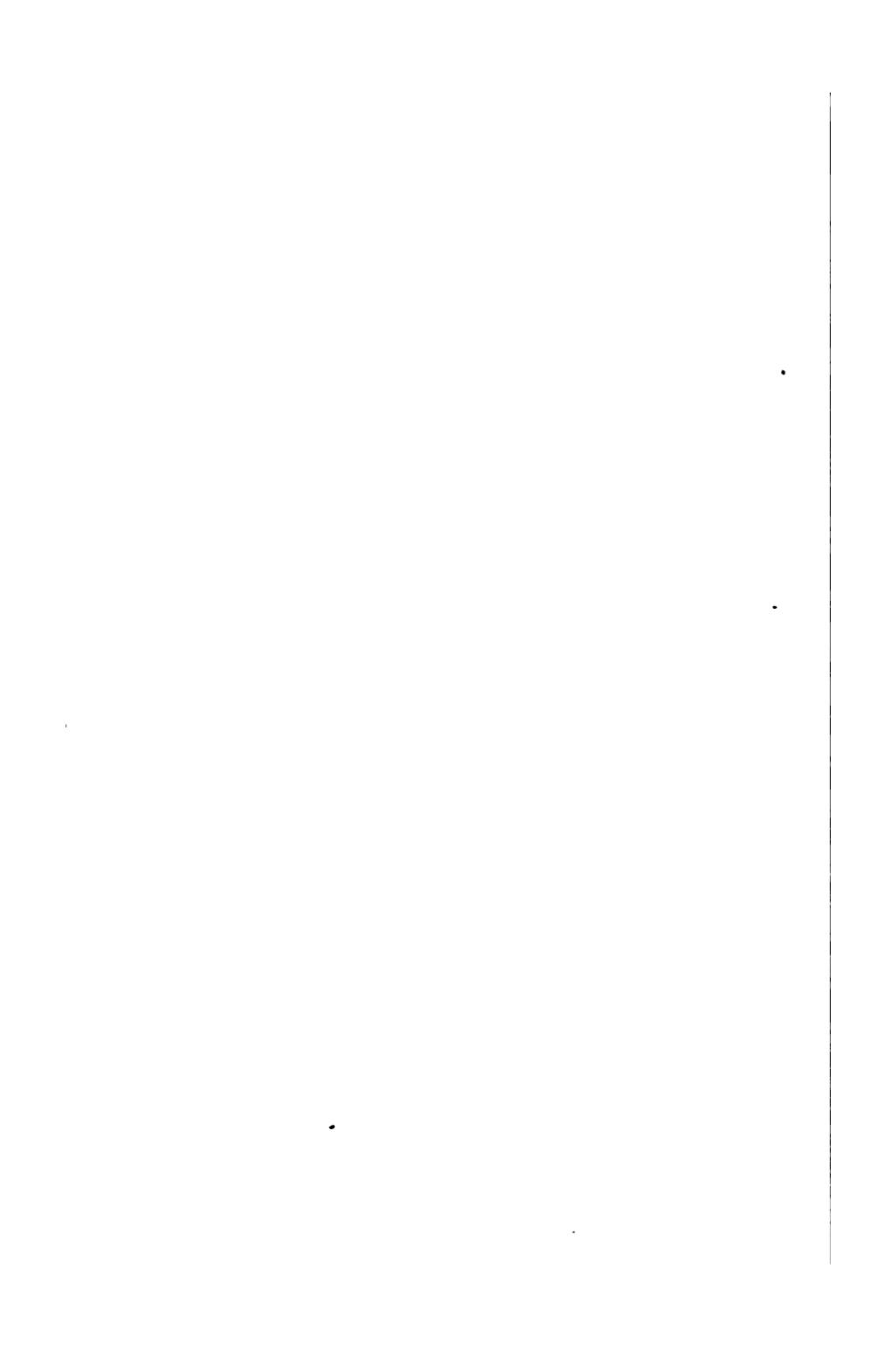
repress unceasingly whatever unruly affections may seek to intermix themselves with our thoughts, or to sway our actions: such as over-eagerness—the agitation of pride or anger—a love of notice or esteem; for if the Spirit of God, which is the Spirit of Charity, rule and direct our hearts, we shall be always on the alert—watching for opportunities of self-denial. Love—such love—is the fulfilling of the whole law: it is the Gospel of Jesus Christ put in practice: it is the carrying out of true Christian doctrine, which instructs us how to die to ourselves in order to live the life of Jesus. Shall we not beg of Him to bestow on us greater generosity, so that the number of His true, loving children may be increased: and that He, seeing our laudable desire of becoming perfect, may pour out upon us yet greater, more signal favours.

II. POINT.

The desirability of the practice of the Presence of God: it promotes generosity.

Let us consider what the happiness of those must be who love God after the perfect manner enjoined by His Beloved Son: *With all the heart, the soul, the strength, the mind.* Their happiness is due to the fact that they have discovered for themselves, the efficacy of the practice of the Presence of God. This exercise consists in a perpetual carefulness to remain under the Eye of God, not by any violent effort, nor by disquieting anxiety on this point, but by paying Him calm, loving attention. The Presence of God, presenting to our view, as in a true mirror, His perfections, shews us, at the same time, those defects which we must strive to efface from our souls. It also affords us solace; and strengthens us especially in our combats when nature

revolts against grace. Are we not aware from our own experience, that it is our want of recollectedness which raises so many hindrances to our progress in the way of sanctity? But when we have acquired the practice of the Presence of God, we shall find that we almost unconsciously—having gained the habit of so doing—avoid useless talking, frivolity in our actions, vain curiosity. We learn to control our feelings, we suffer no disorder, either in our innermost affections nor outward demeanour, to evince a want of respect for God, in Whose Sight we are. The recollection of His Presence is a sure preservative against spiritual declension, lukewarmness—aridity—and weariness; for the more we exercise ourselves in this virtue, the more magnanimous shall we become towards God, since our love will augment in ardour and constancy. We need not seek for any new practices of devotion in order to attain that loving generosity which has produced so many saints,—recollectedness is a most efficacious means, and without it all other devout exercises are valueless. It is a means always within our reach ; and if habitually made use of, will not fail to render us capable of heroic virtues. Under the auspices of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, let us recommence this practice of remaining continually in the Presence of God, being ready for any sacrifices it may impose, and firmly resolved never to abandon it. God Himself will continually favour us with the communication of His grace, and crown our perseverance hereafter by shewing us His glory. If we can now say : *I set the Lord always in my sight* : the Divine promise will be one day fully realised, and : *We shall see the King in His beauty—we shall see the land far off.*



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